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Corbet
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Letters from a Mystic of the Present Day.

Letters from a Mystic of the Present Day.

Letters from a Mystic of the Present Day.

"As a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves; so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof."—ISA. vi. 13.

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible."—1 PETER i. 23.

Rowland W. Corbet.

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Prefatory Letter to Second Edition.

DEAREST FRIEND,

As I hear from you that the first edition of these extracts from letters is exhausted, and that applications to the publisher for further copies lead him to think it worth while to issue a second edition, I readily consent to the publication of a second edition, and naturally address a prefatory letter to you, whose sympathetic care and skill gathered and arranged the extracts in an order best calculated to secure apprehension of their drift.

I have been asked several times, if a second edition were issued, to expound or explain some of the thoughts suggested in them. I

do not feel drawn to do so, much as I delight in doing so in conversation, because I think a thought dropped in a seed-form is more likely to bear good fruit in a sympathetic heart unencumbered with attempts at explanation, which have a tendency to narrow the bearing of the thought, and in securing an intellectual assent to miss the far more important purpose of awakening or confirming a spiritual perception. I increasingly feel that most of us are seriously encumbered with secondhand knowledge, so that *intellectual assent* to the truths of the Christ Revelation usurps the place of a *spiritual perception* of their truthfulness, and consequently the current witness to Him, Who is the Truth, is so timid and feeble amongst those who profess to believe in Him.

I should like to mention two points in relation to my own vision of Jesus Christ our Lord, because I think in doing so I may make more clear the point of view from which perceptions in the following extracts are to be understood, and probably embraced.

I. The *historical* aspect of Jesus I

understand to be the *door* to the spiritual apprehension of Him as the Truth and the Life. The door through which we pass into the kingdom where the historical aspect is swallowed up in the spiritual possession, to be known no more in the rudimentary *external* aspect (2 Cor. v. 16). The sign has passed into the thing signified. The weakness of the letter has been swallowed up in the power of the spirit; acquaintance has passed into the possession which belongs to fellowship. In the clear recognition of this double-relationship to Truth I think lies the solution of all honest Christian controversy, and in it will ultimately be found the true reply of the Christian to the inquiries and complaints of so-called Agnostics, etc. We can only know the Christ as our Life, and the Lord of our Life, *i.e.*, with that knowledge which is accompanied with wisdom, power, and love, and therefore qualifies us to witness to Him—by *immediate* contact and living abiding fellowship with Him. It is possible to know much about Him as an historical personage without any real fellowship with Him, such as belongs to real *belief in* Him,

which I suppose means living *in* and *by* Him.

Christian witness in its spiritual aspect, that is, of persuasive power unto Life, is not to one who lived, said, and did certain things, but to a present living Lord, Who *is* saying and doing wondrous things of Life in us now; this is the true witness of the Church of the Christ. She points to the door through which she came to know Him, but the *power* of her witness is in her experience of the righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, which her union with her Lord secures. Only so far as we are *in* fellowship with the Living Lord can we give to every man that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us with that meekness and reverence which appeals to, and draws forth, the deeper sensibilities of the heart. When Christ has become to us the wisdom of God, and the power of God, then will our witness be not in word only but also in power, and speaking the Truth, which underlies all things, in love we shall be true witnesses of Him who is the Truth, and shall utter forth His word of Truth to the age in which we live.

II. The second point which I wish to mention is in reference to our Lord's Priesthood. This it seems to me is almost invariably treated as though it were after the order of Aaron, and not after the order of Melchisedec. In the Mosaic symbolism the Lamb is the symbol which represents the Priesthood of Christ in the days of His flesh. The high priest in the Mosaic ritual is a subordinate figure, not the Central, which is the Lamb.

The Priesthood of our Lord, *i.e.*, of the *glorified* Christ, which is the Priesthood of the *Christian* dispensation—the ministration of Life unto holiness, in contrast with the old dispensation, which was of sin unto death—is after the order of Melchisedec, the special characteristics of which are *power*, signified in royalty, and *permanence*, signified in inherent nature of Sonship, and exercised in Benediction—for the fulfilment of the promise or gospel preached to Abraham that through his seed all nations of the earth should be blessed.

The purpose of the Priesthood of *the Lord* is the fulfilment of the Divine will in

the Salvation of the world, which purpose is effected through the exercise of *inward* judgment, which in the Christian dispensation is declared to be unto victory, *i.e.*, unto the utter condemnation of sin, and the salvation to the uttermost of the sinner. The sphere of the Lord's judgment* is the heart, and the complete sanctification of the heart is the work of the Fire-Baptism of the Holy Ghost.

The Priesthood of our Lord *now*—*i.e.*, in the day of His Glory, when He, the Son of Man, *is* sitting on the Throne of His Glory—is no longer, as in the days of His flesh, on behalf of man *towards God*, the Priesthood of obedience to the Father's Will as our elder brother—but it is on behalf of God *towards men*, ministering to us the blessing of the Spirit of Holiness, whereby we are reconciled in heart and mind unto God, and made Holy even as He is Holy.

* It is important to notice that our law courts offer no materials of interpretation of our Lord's Judgment—the best is the one He suggests Himself, the judgment of a physician on undertaking a case—LUKE iv. 23.

Doubtless you have noticed how often our *Lord's* intercession is interpreted as a pleading with God for man in order to secure God's favour towards man, thereby setting at nought the whole teaching of Christ. It seems to me the best rendering of the word translated "making intercession for" is the one employed for the purpose in the Collect for S. Stephen's Day in the Church of England Prayer-book—viz., succouring. The true meaning of our Lord's intercession would be best secured by the rendering, "He ever liveth to succour us." Then the intercession would be seen to be, that He, on the part of God, is ever ministering to us, rescuing us from the bonds of sin, and bringing us by the power of His love and wisdom into the bosom of His Father and our Father.

I understand that the life of Jesus in the days of His flesh was the revelation of God's love and mercy to mankind presented to us in His complete fulfilment as man of all righteousness in Himself—in all things He fulfilled His Father's will: and that the life of Jesus in the day of His Glory is the

effective exercise of His Power in fulfilling all righteousness in men, and thus bringing them into fellowship with His Father and our Father, and so fulfilling the Divine purpose in Creation that all should become "very good."

I am quite sure that if we distinguished carefully the Priesthood of the Christ in the days of His flesh, and the Priesthood of the Christ in the day of His Glory, we should see the signification of the old and new dispensations in their mutual relation and contrast, and should ourselves be inspired with that aspect of the enthusiasm of the Christ which would lift us out of the petty conflicts that are now disturbing the Churches, and enable us to discern the significance of the aspirations of our own day, and to lead them into what is noble, pure, and beneficent.

Ever your affectionate friend,

R. W. CORBET.

STOKE RECTORY,
HODNET, SHROPSHIRE.

Prefatory Note.

THESE Letters were written without any thought of publication, but the friends to whom they were addressed found in them so much of Light and Life, that permission has been obtained to make them known to a wider circle.

They have been left as they were written, without any attempt to render them less fragmentary and spontaneous in character, lest the relationship with Truth which they reveal should be sacrificed to the aim of literary completeness. As their Title indicates, they are from the pen of one who, while acknowledging the importance of both the outward and inward witness to Truth,

yet speaks of the immediate rather than of the mediate relations of the Life-giving Spirit with man.

The enlarged area of Thought in the present day has doubtless increased Tolerance of varying opinions, but at the same time it has made us aware of widening chasms of separation between us regarding vital principles. And the recognition of such separation seems to wither in hopelessness even the desire for Unity which belongs to our Nature and contributes so essentially to our well-being. The aim of many of these Letters is to awaken the consciousness of our *Actual Union with God and with one another*. This Faith is happily no new one; yet it is believed that deeper conceptions of its significance and power of expansion may be suggested by these pages, that in some readers Hope in the reality of this Union may be strengthened even under the dark and separating conditions to which they have become painfully sensitive, and, finally, that from this re-assured Hope may spring the confidence and gladness which should belong to the children of One Father.

Truth assimilated from within possesses us.

It is a joy to find those who will receive and give forth the utterances of the Spirit as He labours to bear witness to the unknown (not unknowable) riches of the wisdom and love of God. Of course those who look at Truth from a natural and not a spiritual standpoint see danger always, because to them Truth is something outside themselves, of which they may lose hold. If, on the contrary, we stand "in the Spirit," we shall necessarily recognise the Holy Spirit as the absolute Lord, and shall shrink from no consequences, from no misjudgments, that may accompany an utterance of His message.

I am feeling with intense conviction the power (as we were saying the other morning) of a clear perception. Why should we be content to work in a hazy fog when we hear, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and Christ shall give thee light"? The most practical occupation in the world is the effort to make clear our vision of *principles*. A principle clearly perceived is an active Power; we become "one with" it; it consubstantiates us into itself; we become in that clear vision "one with" the Spirit, Who is the life of all substances, of all facts, of everything. Hence our wisdom is to seek the Kingdom of God, the underlying truth of things; and the more full we are of light, *i.e.*, of the vision of truth, the more energetic we necessarily become in lovingkindness. Seek light and you will love; you will not merely be making *efforts* to love, but will rather recognise the *necessity* of loving: you will stand in the higher nature, which *is* Love. The words of St. John the Baptist always come home to me in dealing with revealed Truth; we are but "voices"—He is the speaker, and He is the subject-matter.

We need to know God, *i.e.*, the Truth, in heart and mind. Mind-knowledge, alone, seems to me devilish, while all our ideas of heart-knowledge appear to be connected with suffering. Perhaps the angels can only attain to heart-knowledge through the perception of our suffering. Do you remember a picture at Milan in which there is a little cherub trying to feel one of the points of the crown of thorns with his little first finger? It seemed to me a true thought.

God to be known in heart and mind.

The particulars you mention of your later education, the time (according to Heb. xii. 6) of "the scourging," when the "staff" seems changed for the "rod," interest me much. Yet it is of the same material, whether it be the "staff" or the "rod," viz., Love, and both have one purpose in view. Our comfort *now* is in the "passion" of *receiving* the knowledge of God, which must be as fire consuming all that is of self: our comfort *then* will be in the "exaltation" of *giving* that knowledge of God, which will consume

Life an education.

all that withstands Love in the outward world; *then* we shall be as sovereign benefactors together with the Elder Brother on our Father's Throne. And beyond there is a yet farther vision (1 Cor. xv. 24*). We must each of us go *into the depths*, if we are to save those that are in the depths. The Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deeps of God, and there is the discernment of good and evil, which we find in Heb. v. 14.† I think I have some glimpse now of the possible origin of evil—God *hiding Himself*. Were He not to hide Himself, I fancy personality in us, after the human order, would not be possible. Were He not to hide Himself, we could not live, we

Educaiton through darkness.

* "Then cometh the end, When He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.* * * * And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all."

† "But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

should be consumed in Him: and hence He lays on one side His glory, He makes Himself sin (as indicated in 2 Cor. v. 21*), He appears out of His order that His creatures may come to know Him *in* His order, and, in that coming to know Him, may attain their personality in Him; may not be absorbed or consumed, but may live in Him as conscious entities after the order of sons.

Before proceeding to consider darkness, evil, or sin, we must have arrived at some clear notion of light, holiness, and righteousness. It seems to me that our utterances as well as our perceptions on these points are confused, because we do not look at them steadily as in relation to the Christ. It is the digging deep into the rock that secures the superstructure, and enables us without fear to look to the right hand and to the left, to the Heaven above and to the Hell beneath. I could not myself invite a con-

* "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

sideration of the origin, nature, and purpose of evil, or sin, until I was conscious that there existed a spiritual understanding of the true character of God and of our Sonship in Christ as the second Adam, in those I was venturing to address.

I think that the difficulties attending the subject of evil, or sin, are best met indirectly, that is, by dealing with the being of man. What are his potentialities, what is his goal, what the conditions with which his being is now environed? Adopting this treatment of the subject, we are on the pathway of our revelation, and are greatly protected from controversy and from straying into aimless speculations.

I am quite sure that a clearer apprehension of the Christ, under the aspect of His glorification, will greatly modify, and, in many respects, altogether change, much that has been held respecting the education, responsibilities, and prospects of mankind. The New Creation, of which the glorified Christ is the Head, seems as yet to have been but imperfectly apprehended. The doctrine of the Holy Ghost is but a slightly

lored region of our creed, yet it is the
ner-stone of "the dispensation of the
rit," in which we profess to be living; the
pouring of the Holy Spirit is the crown of
y of the Second Adam, by Whom we are
le Kings and Priests to God.

Personality in God.

In the first place, "Eternal Life," which I understand to represent true Personality, or, in other words, conscious existence in God, is the advancing in knowledge of the "Only True God" (John xvii. 3). Secondly, through starting in darkness, or sin, we are enabled to come *gradually* into the light, which *gradual* coming into the light brings fuller knowledge, because we thus begin to apprehend it in its various qualities, as they are drawn out in the over-ruling of the darkness. I can see that in this way God becomes known to His creatures—which, it is reasonable to believe, would otherwise be impossible—and the liberty of the glory of

the children of God is secured. To see Him as He is would, I imagine, overwhelm us; we might be excellent *creatures*, perhaps, but not *sons* exulting in the fullest, freest consciousness of His goodness. The parable of the Prodigal Son illustrates this thought. The son, after his education in error, came to know his father, became alive to his father, in a way he had never realized before. He had been dead to his father before he started on his journey. For surely all is dead to the heart which does not recognise or respond to its affection; the Love is all on one side, the other is dead to it; in the life of Love there must be recognition and response.

We are apt to forget, in talking about choice, that we start in the dark, are born blind, and that thus our choice is of a limited character; the choice which a blind child makes as to beauty, colour, utility, and the like. I constantly hear people talking as if we started in full possession of our spiritual faculties. We start, on the contrary, with our *natural* faculties awakened, or *en rapport* with the outward and visible disorder, while our

spiritual faculties are in a rudimentary condition, and must be gradually educated through repeated exhibitions of the mistakenness of the natural perceptions. You ask "how, through this education, are persons differentiated?" Surely these two considerations throw light upon that question. First, our environment of flesh and blood, with its specialities of temperament, etc., which we inherit from our parents; secondly, the experience of life in relation to outward circumstances,—these are quite enough to account for differentiation, and to bring about the beauty of variety in unity, even as the prism reveals the intrinsic loveliness of variety in unity in Light.

Personality secured by our conditions.

We choose in the dark, consent in the light.

I think full vision prevents the exercise of choice between good and evil,* and the fact of our being conscious of a power to choose between the two shows that we are in the

* Is not *twilight* the appropriate condition for choice, perfect darkness and perfect light equally precluding it?

dark—we could not choose evil if we really saw it to be *only* evil. In the case of a temptation, the very force of the temptation lies in the fact that the thing does appear good, pleasant to look upon, and likely to advance our knowledge. I would venture to suggest that you should criticise your notion of choice under the remembrance of the conditions in which we start and move in this existence. "Consent," I think, is a better word than "choice" in relation to man's so-called "free-will." True, when we are standing in the natural, or old Adam, it seems a choice to us; but when we come to stand in the spiritual, or new Adam, we discover that our free-will is not exercised in the way of choice as between two alternatives, but in the free consent* to the Will of God that it is "good, acceptable, and perfect." I incline to think that in the distinction be-

* "Love, Who by Thyself art binding
Every thought and wish of mine;
Love, which round my heart art winding
Hidden cords of strength Divine;
Love, I yield myself to Thee,
Thine for evermore to be." *Novalis.*

tween the natural and spiritual perceptions the solution of the perplexity will be found in the question of so-called free-will.

I think the Personality of God is *objected** in the personalities of His creatures, and they give Him new fellowships. At the end of the dispensation the Lord our Head will Himself as *the* Personality of personalities present to God the treasures of His inheritance of the Saints, and then God will be all in all. This is the Church of the firstborn. A double consciousness, I believe, is the ground of our personality, even as an ellipse necessitates two foci. An eternal consciousness belongs to us, that is distinguishable from our transitory consciousness. It is a mystery which we cannot explain. We recognise a truth as truth because we have known it before in the original consciousness. Before coming into Time I was, but did not know that I was. The potentiality of all His creatures is substantially in God, and thus we must account for their growth and development.

* *I.e.*, is expressed.

I believe "Salvation" to be the formation of the spiritual body, for our spirits are not saved, that is, are not complete, until they are in the exercise of clear perception and free action; then, and not till then, is salvation attained, and we have reached Personality as Sons of God, and are qualified to reign with the Lord in His second coming "without sin unto salvation." And the Gospel, which is the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, is "the power of God unto salvation" to everyone that believeth. How joyful will it be when we burst out of these grub-bodies, and sail off in clear and free pursuit of beneficent service, all the more wise and powerful because of the experience gained in the school of this existence! Salvation and Personality.

The important matter is to distinguish between *being* and *consciousness of being*. In the former we are all one, and in the latter we are all different; all possible potentialities are enshrined in our being; the actualization of these potentialities is in con- Personality.

sciousness. Hence, in considering the question of personality, two points must be kept in remembrance. (1) The *order* of being. By this I mean that we ought to distinguish between that which is the human order and that which is the angelic order. Some persons, I know, believe that these are identical; for my own part, at present I think I see a strongly-marked distinction between the order of Powers and the order of Humanity —though this, of course, may be because my mind's eye is as yet out of focus. (2) The second point rests on the different conditions, current and hereditary, under which the consciousness of our being is realized in the case of each one of us.

The Lord Jesus Christ represents, to my mind, *our* order of being in the attainment of its full realization—He has attained full consciousness of being after the order of man. And by *full* consciousness I understand one that is both inward and outward: inward, such as He expressed when He said, "I and the Father are one;" outward, as evinced in the pouring out of His Spirit upon all flesh after His glorification. Consciousness of

oneness with the Author of our being, and of oneness with all the members of the body in sympathy and effective service, constitutes, in my opinion, an ideal of Personality for us. I feel that my Personality is inchoate until I live in full fellowship with my Father and all my fellow-men in thought and action. The purpose of religion is to bring us into the full consciousness of our being, or, in other words, into the complete knowledge, *i.e.*, consciousness, of our Lord Jesus Christ. When we believe *into* Him as the Wisdom of God in relation to our order, and the Power of God which actualizes us in His Wisdom, then we are becoming the children of God. That which is but a germ in being becomes an advancing actuality in consciousness; the seed develops its latent energies in our consciousness, filling us gradually with the Love which binds us in fullest fellowship with the Head and all the members,—in a word, forms the *Christ-life* in us, to be *expressed* when "this mortal must put on immortality."

You ask me to distinguish between the *offspring* which applies to all alike, and the

condition of those to whom Christ gave "power to *become* the children of God," who enter the Kingdom of their regeneration. I think I meet your inquiry if for the last phrase I substitute "those who are 'sons of God'" (Rom. viii. 14*). I understand that every human being born into the world has a triple paternity: (1) the father of his flesh; in which flesh is (2) the Serpent's seed, *i.e.*, death or the lie, the presence of which constitutes the Serpent also his father; and (3) God, Who breathes the light into man, that light "which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," and to which appeal is made under the name of Conscience. To those who recognise and believe in that Light, and what it signifies of relationship with *the* Light, is given the power to become children, that is, to enter into the consciousness of kinship with God. In the word here used for "children" (τέκνα) the idea of kinship is emphasized. All who surrender themselves to the guidance of the

* "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

pirit of God, the Spirit of establishment in onship, are the sons of God; these are they ho are "inheriting" the Kingdom of God, righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Ioly Ghost." Or, as we might put it, ıey have reached their majority, and are astening the coming of the Kingdom; they re the perfect, or *full-grown* in Christ, to hom reference is made in Heb. vi. 1,* and ol. i. 28.†

You ask, too, for a few words upon the life ıat acts *unconsciously* in all, and the Christ-fe which is *formed in believers.* In God we ve and move and have our being, whether e recognise and know Him or not. His life ıstains us in existence, but when we believe ı Him, Who "is the Life," then His life is ırmed in us after the Christ-Ideal, we become

* "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine f Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying gain the foundation of repentance from dead works ıd of faith towards God."

† "Whom we preach, warning every man, and aching every man in all wisdom; that we may resent every man perfect in Christ Jesus."

Christ, and are "one spirit" with the Lord If we can see the question clearly, viz., o man as he *is* and as he is to *become*, the con siderations that follow will be more easil dealt with.

Does it not strike you that we make a mistake in the measure of importance we attach to this stage of existence? Of course, while we are in it, it is, for us, of vast importance; but when we consider matters "in the large," its importance sinks almost into insignificance. Then, again, I find it helpful to myself to preserve clearly the distinction between (1) God expressed, or, perhaps, impressed, in humankind, and (2) God expressed to the universe. I will endeavour to make my meaning plainer. I must *know* my Father before I can express Him in action or otherwise. *Now* we are, each of us, being educated into this know-

The knowledge of God attained through successive stages of existence.

ledge, some *here*, in this stage of existence, others in the successive stages, but each *in his own place*, that is, where the Spirit in him will flower and fruit after its kind. Every stage helps on the development, and each subsequent stage is the outcome of the previous one. It was to this, as I understand the text, that St. Peter referred when he spoke of Judas going "to his own place." Judas had made a great advance in *this* existence; he had learnt that the idols of covetousness are profitless, and that self-seeking is murder. How many of us, in more respectable garb than that which we commonly assign to Judas, have not yet learnt this necessary lesson! And so we each pass on to "his own place" of education. Do you notice that the writers of the Epistles make little or nothing of physical death? They bear two great points in mind, (1) our present standing, and (2) our ultimate standing in the day of the Lord. We persist in walking by sight and esteeming this existence Life, and the end of this existence Death; whereas, rightly viewed, this existence is but a stage in mortality, and so-called

Death a step onwards to the fulness of immortality. Each one of us is, as it were, a limb of God, with the potentiality of perfection, and gradually, through the experience of multiform error, to be developed into the full exercise of spontaneous and joyous activity. You say, "If God threw me down to take up another"——I need not finish the sentence, for in the nature of things it is impossible; I am that which is Divine in my flesh; how, then, could God throw away that which is the *I* in me—the *I* which constitutes me? He would be throwing away Himself as useless. The regeneration or new birth is the coming into consciousness that our "I am" is "in," "of," and "to," *the* "I AM." Oh, when that is known, how speedily do the surface questions which have perplexed us pass away like many a bad dream before the Light of Day!

St. Paul expresses *his* realization of this when he says, "By the grace of God I am what I am," using the formula associated in his mind with the Lord God Himself. The revelation of Jesus is, that Man and God *are* one. We are standing in the revelation of

the Lord Jesus when we maintain this Fact, in relation to being, and the certainty of its ultimate realization in knowledge, in the case of every member of the human race, through the power of the Lord Jesus Christ. With times and seasons we have nothing to do; but with the Faith, the Hope, and the ministration of Love that issues out of the Faith and realizes the Hope, we have everything to do. Ah! it is the indestructible Faith, which is our true being, and the universal Hope, that answers to the potentiality of the Omnipotent Love, that alone satisfy the heart created anew after God; these are the Rock, the End, and the Power, of our being.

Perhaps in what I have written of the perception which lightens my eyes in the darkness of this outward life, you may find something which is an echo and a confirmation of the surging thoughts in your own spirit.

Universal Hope inspires antagonism to evil.

I do not think that the truly Christian perception of the universal beneficence of God our Father and the oneness of the Creation can produce Stoicism. Rather, as it seems to me, it necessarily produces, in the light of the Hope it lays bare, a stronger sense of the ghastly contrast between the Truth and the blank denials of it which are in our conditions; and a godly hatred is stirred up, which can be satisfied with nothing short of absolute destruction of such denials. When the dark shadow of the lie enwraps a fellow-creature's life, we can but view it with horror. There is nothing *Christian* in

whitewashing or gilding over this hideou mortality. The tribulation is as bad a can be, and the very magnificence of th sure promise in Hope emphasizes a nobl indignation against it. I am sure that the Churches *stood* a little more in the Hop and somewhat less in the sin, which is th denial of the Hope, we should see some up lifting of the veil of unbelief—perhaps se it "rent in twain from the top to th bottom." But while they take their stan upon sin as the reality, and indicate th Hope merely as a possibility, they strengthe the hold of sin upon mankind and smoth the capacities which the Hope would hav awakened in the love of Truth and horr of sin.

One's heart rejoices in the awakenir that is coming upon the rising generatior and when the Hope is grasped in its univers embrace, and as the omnipotent will of Lov then will horror of the lie and love of th truth be established, and the Gospel will b preached to *all* the nations. Intellectu Christians are lamenting the decay of Faith spiritual Christians are rejoicing in the pr

spect of a reign of Faith, when formulæ assented to shall give way to a Life believed in. I seem to see that, as long as a partial Salvation is admitted, we educate ourselves to bear with evil, because we profess to believe that God is content to bear with it for ever. A partial Salvation really plays into the hands of sin, and is a weapon of the evil power.

The necessary activity of Love.

To the inquiry, "Why do you not leave everyone alone? What is the use of struggling to help anyone to be better?" the answer is simple enough. Love, which is the energy of Truth, can seek nothing short of the welfare of all, and finds its necessary outcome in the effort to hasten the egress of all from their delusions. I believe this is the law of progress towards the attainment of the Divine purpose revealed in Christ, viz., "that all shall come to the knowledge of the Truth." Only the Love or Life of God in any quickens the life in others. Such a thought as that of making another *better*

never comes into my mind, but certain that of helping another to know the Lor does—though the more familiar thought i how all do really help me to know Hin Love does not work under authority othe than that of its own necessary enthusiasm.

What is Man?

I do not think that the Comtist worship c humanity sufficiently distinguishes betwee the man *as we see him* and the man *as he is* and, further, it does not do justice, even if i in any form accepts it, to the truth, that mer are now being educated into Personality Both these thoughts are fundamental one in the Christ-Revelation.

In answer to your question, I would neve venture to say there are not possibilities o creature-existence possessing more intimate knowledge of God than humanity does, bu I have no power of conceiving any such creatures. Sonship is the apex of our vision and I understand it to be the offspring of a marriage in God between the Thought and the Word, and to be the Only-begotten Son

Of the possible emanations from the Word we shall know more when the end is attained, and God is All-in-all. Perhaps angels, good and bad, are in that order of being. But man I feel to be the offspring of some mystical union in God, as figured in the story of Adam's creation (Gen. ii. 7).* If we were living in our Centre, which is Christ, we should, I fancy (perhaps without any consciousness of it), be necessarily ever reflecting the invisible rays of love and quickening power, like the rays beyond each end of the spectrum, which our eyes cannot see, but which, nevertheless, powerfully affect us.† It is just for the want of this Christ-centredness, that we who bear His Name are so little to one another, and so little to the world that does not recognise Him. It is a denial of Him when we substitute an historical record of Jesus for a living witness

Christ-Light.

* "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

† A friend writes:—"I often feel as if here and now we discerned merely the lower hemisphere of natural law, and in pursuing our reasonings on it into

of His redemptive Love in ourselves. Surely the Holy Ghost's conviction of the world of sin is to be through the energy of His presence in the living members of His Body. Love in the living member, with sweet compassion and subtlety of vision quickening into life the dormant consciousness of the dead brother or sister,—was not this conception before the mind of Jesus when He commissioned His apostles (Matt. xxviii. 19 and John xx. 22, 23*)? Oh! if we will hold fast to our Head, in spite of all our shortcomings His living Light and Power will be felt in

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the other half that shall complete the orb, had need of faith no less than sight. Did Christ come to exhibit this hidden hemisphere of Law, and show us evil at a disadvantage, as we habitually see good at a disadvantage? Health contagious instead of Sickness —Life triumphant instead of Death?"

* "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

"And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained."

the earthen vessels, and dear cold hearts will be a little warmed even in this dreary far-off country. We must emphasize in unwearying steadfastness the universality of the Christ-light. It is precisely *that* which awakens new life in every department of consciousness, and which will administer the enthusiasm for our day. It is not Sectarianism that can do this, but Catholicism in its fullest and deepest sense. In this aspect no religion can compete with that of the Lord Christ, and it is an enthusiasm which carries its protectiveness in itself. We must burn up Sectarianism and despair by the love of the universal Hope, not reproaching but consuming them both. This splendid sunshine and exquisite spring-green tell one where the Power lies for the swallowing up of death into Life—in the Heart of the Most High and in the ground of our being.

The temptation of Adam and Eve.

I wrote, I hope, not too long a letter to our friend B. on Sunday, indicating a reply to the inquiry "how Adam and Eve were susceptible to the serpent's temptation." (1) On the negative side there were the conditions of limited knowledge of God, suggested in the intermittent fellowship with Him personally, and the running away from Him in trouble ; and the living under the outward law "Thou shalt not"—both features intimating that the man was not yet in the full conditions appropriate to Sonship, viz., abiding fellowship with the Father, outwardly and inwardly, in oneness of heart and mind, such as is covenanted in the Promise

(see Heb. viii. 10; xii. 22*). (2) On the positive side there was that in the constitution of the man which occasioned a susceptibility to the serpent's advance. Out of the ground the Lord God formed man and every beast of the field; he was "of the earth, earthy." The seed of the devil, as I understand it, is distrust of God, leading on to unbrotherliness towards fellow-creatures. This belongs to our constitution hereditarily, and constitutes what St. Paul calls "the flesh and its lusts," selfishness, sin, or death. So far as we live according to it, we are children of the devil, living according to his lie; but if we live according to the Spirit, or our true Being, we are children of God, living according to the Truth. Then I believe that in the separation from the Tree of Life we

* "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people."

"But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels."

see God's blessed judgment upon these disordered conditions. The promise of the New Life of victory over moral death is not to be realized in eating of the Tree of Life in Eden, but in the infusion, into the regenerate heart, of the power of Him Who is the Light of the Life. Man is to be regenerated and perfected in a New Creation in union with the Source of life itself, not reformed upon the ground of the old.

The corruptible and incorruptible Seed.

In 1 John iii. 8 it is interesting to notice the words, "He that committeth sin is of the devil"; if we yield our hearts to the evil or corruptible seed, the moral product is devilish. But the love of God was manifested that He might destroy these moral products which are the works of the devil. On the other hand, he that yields his heart to the Lord is born of God, and does not sin, because the seed of God *dwells* in his heart through the power of the union effected by and with the Lord.

the woman's seed we know to be
ity anointed with the promise of the
of the glorified Adam, who is our
ousness. With our hearts, won by the
ve beauty of the Gospel, which is the
ng of that mystery, we believe, that is,
" one with " that glorious grace, and
rally children of God, who know their
and rejoice in the quickening power
Spirit. The seed of the serpent mani-
n the works of the flesh (Gal. v. 19-21),
nifested Son of God will in due time
by His Spirit shedding abroad love
heart.

Creation.

Whatever I fin
Adam and Eve only articulates a
God. You test a thing by its illus
There appears to be a Fall because t
a transgression, but really it was t
to a blessed result; it was the w
higher platform of consciousness.
the Creation was God's sacrifice, anc
pose the full beatitude of creaturely li
ask whether I do not "see the signs
everywhere, whether Creation does
like a wreck." I see it as the wreck o
seed. "Except a corn of wheat
the ground and die, it abideth alone
seems to me true of Creation; it brir

numberless personalities as the result. I see no law of progress or education without that, for it seems impossible to have the fulness of light without tasting darkness. We *stand* in light by being educated into it, a gleam of consciousness grows thus into fulness. Some antagonistic condition seems needed for development. Is not our revelation in the beginning of Genesis an expression of truth on this subject in such a form as we can understand?

Adam and Eve.

Adam, as an inexperienced babe, in the stage of innocence does not represent to me the Adam of manhood: he was naked, that is, imperfect. He has to die to innocence to attain to holiness, which is perfection; the second Adam is the Holy One. All that comes to pass is for the education of man out of innocence into the consciousness of holiness.

The Fall.

I must put the "Fall" in the conditions, lest I think of a fallen creature as altogether

apart from God. Each detail of our conditic is bad *in itself*, but not bad if we are movi out of it. We are only living when we are motion. Stagnation is death. I do not thi we need fear that in the progress out of In viduality into the Infinite we shall be so merg in Him as to lose personality. We shall th attain personality. Each one must be ful developed in order to realize the diversi necessary to Unity. I look upon the cent of each as the centre of potentiality, the c cumference the realized consciousness. F personality necessarily includes these t thoughts.

Redemption through the Second Adam.

I see two revelations in the crucified l of Jesus: (1) the manifestation of God's lo (2) the redemption of the race out of dea He, as the second Adam, fulfilled the C by the filial surrender of His will to t Father's. We inherit that surrender in c spiritual conditions from the Second Ada even as we inherit the transgression from t first Adam in our natural conditions. I v ture to feel that our Lord's obedience ga

the race a new standing. The manifestation of the Father's love is seen, as we see in Paul's words, (1) in not reckoning the offence of the world, (2) in reconciling the world unto Himself (2 Cor. v. 19).

The New Creation is [illegible] with the Fount of all law; not obedience to the enactments of law, but following with the Spirit or Source of law itself. The Holy Ghost is the power of this consciousness realized in our Lord Jesus Christ, producing or realizing the same consciousness in the hearts of such as believe in the gospel. Humanity: that is to say, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ the race is godlike, is in full consciousness with the Supreme or Most High God.

Yes, it is true that before Christ's coming into the world, as the Light of the world, religion, you say, was "an aspiration and a promise." Now, after Pentecost, when [illegible] religion is "an inspiration with power."

We do not repeat His life and [illegible]

victory, but we are to stand *in* His life conflict and victory as an accomplished for the race, and in that belief we are enat to contend with the denial rife in the ward world, and the outward conditions our own present existence, and to rise i full Son-consciousness. He came in the "l ness of sinful flesh," a most real relationsl but not in the first degree of intensity ii cated in such an expression as "form sinful flesh. So I should say that our L in the days of His flesh felt the attractiver of his temptations, was completely suscepti but had not predisposition to yield to te tation; susceptible to, but not warped favour of, temptation. When we look at nature of the temptations suggested to H this becomes interestingly clear. Might t not be classed under the head of temptati to individual action?

The likeness of Sinful Flesh.

The Seed of the Woman and the Spirit of God.

You ask: Do you see any distinction tween the seed of the woman, the Christ in all, and the Spirit of God? Yes, certai

The seed of the woman is Man, that is, a union of the Spirit of God with matter (Gen. ii. 7), or, in other words, the spirit of God realizing Himself in human consciousness, for I understand matter to represent the sphere of creaturely consciousness. So, you see, in everyone there is the union which constitutes human consciousness overlaid with worldliness, ignorance, etc., so that it cannot assert itself. In the person of Jesus Christ, however, by the power of the Holy Ghost (which is the power of *ideal* human consciousness in the Word), that consciousness did assert itself, though not to the full, for He was "in the likeness of sinful flesh." This human consciousness in Jesus Christ through faith in the Father rises over all impediments of the likeness of sinful flesh into the glory of fullest consciousness in God, and from Him radiates out that glorified human consciousness (the Holy Ghost) to quicken ours into Light, Love, and Power.

Learning of the Spirit.

If, my dear friend, what we have been

talking of is to vanish away, it will be only to give way to something far more blessed in character and extent. We see "in part," but we do see Him, though it be only in part the more lovely the prospect, the nearer it must be to the truth. Again, we cannot *fancy* truth; we may fancy *about* truth when we are in the carnal mind, being led by the outward word, whether it be of a teacher whom we call the Church, or of an individual whom we call a theologian. In either case, what we see is what we fancy *they* see. We only *see* truth when we are taught immediately by the Spirit of Truth. Let us take our revelation simply, as it is given us, and let us believe that the Lord spoke truly and *is* come to be the Guide and Teacher of the hearts of His children. His desire is that we should look up into His face and know Him as "Our Father." We have been trying during the past week to look more earnestly into that Countenance, and read its lines and movements, His nature and His will.

Dear sad J. is full of fears, but the vision will presently come, and he will know the Lord as "all things and in all," and he will

be a blessed light. I feel I know his standing well; his utterances want simplicity and spirituality. He knows Jesus as "the Christ" but not yet as "the Lord," so it seems to me. Hence he lingers in the letter of the Gospel history; he does not mount up into the heavens with St. Paul, and commune with the Lord of Glory, in communion with Whom the earthly history is known in its boundless and blessed significance.

Defect in our highest joys.

In three respects it seems to me we are conscious of defect in our sublimest moments on earth: (1) the fear of our joy passing away shortly, (2) the incapacity of fully rising up to it, (3) the longing for a further sympathy in the enjoyment of it. These three defects will fade away in the perfect condition of the glorified humanity.

The reason why I am urgent upon the Melchizedek priesthood is because I believe that in the recognition of that priesthood alone do we recognise the Priesthood of the Lord. The limitations of the Aaronic priesthood are

gone; they belonged to the law of sin
death; the Law of Moses was a shad
Jesus in the flesh was the image; but
Lord Jesus is He who was to come,
Universal Quickener.

The Christ. In considering the subject of "the Chr
it is important to keep clear in one's m
the distinction between the two aspects
the Christ which come before us in H
Scripture:—

I. The Christ-seed, which is the life o
men.

II. The individual Man, in Whom
Christ-seed came into flower
fruit.

To put it in another way. In Scripture
find the expression "Christ" used of
human race viewed ideally, and of the
Member of that race, Who has attained
ideal, the Elder Brother of the race. T
distinction, or twofold aspect of the Ch
is strongly marked in Heb. ii. 5-15;
in St. Paul's use of the expression "Ch

our life" (Col. iii. 4) and "Christ Jesus the Lord" (Col. ii. 6).

I. The *Christ-seed.* I will, for the sake of clearness, confine myself to Heb. ii. 5-15.* You will notice that from verse 5 to verse 8 the point emphasized is that "man" is destined to rule the inhabited earth (v. 5), or, to be crowned with glory and honour, etc. (vers. 7, 8, 9). Hence Man is the Christ of God,

* "For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will? For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that Thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; Thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of Thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But

the Son, anointed with the destiny of Lordship; in view of his predestined office the life or being of mankind is called Christ: "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. i. 28). The *incorruptible seed* in every man is the Christ-seed, that is, the seed which is anointed with the destiny of Sonship over the House of God, and which, as a true seed, has in it

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we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became Him, for Whom are all things, and by Whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto My brethren, in the midst of the Church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put My trust in Him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given Me. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

the powers of its own development. And under such conditions as are congenial to its development it most certainly will attain the fulness of efflorescence and fruitage, *i.e.* (in the present case), the fulness of fellowship with God in His wisdom and power.

II. The *Man in whom that Christ-seed came into flower and fruit.* You will notice that in Heb. ii. 9-15 the point emphasized is that in the case of Jesus this destiny has been realized. In him the Christ-seed has budded, flowered, and attained to fruitage; is in fullest fellowship with the Father, and thence administers or realizes the Father's purpose in His brethren, who are still in the valley of the shadow of death—"He is the Author of their salvation"—the elder Brother, who has maintained the birthright, has inherited or come into the possession of the blessing, the joy of which is to be the Benefactor of the whole family,—the Deliverer, and therefore Jesus of Nazareth is called emphatically *the* Christ, *the* One Who has realized in Himself the promise or eternal destiny wherewith He was anointed in the mind of the Most High, the Descendant of Abraham. With the [illegible]

ized the promise made to his seed, as also the promise made to the seed of the woman in Eden. Hence the term "Christ" is used sometimes as in relation to the *Christ-potentiality* in mankind, the incorruptible seed of life in man, sometimes as in relation to the *Lord* Christ, in Whom that Christ-potentiality has been fully actualized, *i.e.*, in Whom the incorruptible seed has attained its destined fruitage of consciousness, perfect fellowship with the Father *in mind* and fullest administration of His mind *in action.* He is our great "Succourer," Who ever liveth to succour His brethren who are in the "tribulation," feeding us with the bread and wine of His toil, the fruits of His labour and bloody sweat, so that, refreshed and sustained by His quickening Spirit, we may rise out of the body of humiliation into the body of His glory. The Christ is formed in us when, through faith in the incorruptible Seed, our hearts are filled with its living virtue, and being altogether purified by the power of His Spirit, we become strong "to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to

know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that we may be filled with all the fulness of God" (Ephes. iii. 18, 19). *Then* is the Christ-potentiality actualized in us; then are we "Christs" in God, being in the full consciousness or possession of our inheritance in the Son: we sit with Him on His throne, which I understand to mean we co-operate with Him in the succouring of the brethren yet in the great tribulation.

Consciousness of Being and of Conditions of Being.

Consciousness, as I understand it, must be viewed in two relations: (1) Being; (2) Conditions of Being. Now, our conditions of Being are wrong; hence the consciousness in relation to them is *at two with* the consciousness in relation to our Being: we are *at two* in ourselves. Now the Holy Spirit seems to me (but I am only groping in ways that *appear* indicated in Scripture) to have to do with conditions of Being. He, the quickening Spirit, witnesses to our spirits, and thus corrects the consciousness which belongs to our conditions, purifying it of death and corruption, and so bringing us to *know* that we know our God. The Holy

Spirit, the Lord of life, lifts us out of the darkness, selfishness, and impotence of self-consciousness, into the wisdom, love, and power of the universal consciousness, that is, into full fellowship with God.

Our *Being* is one with Him, whether we know it or not; our *conditions* are as yet of our mortality, but we are begotten again unto a lively hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, in Whom believing we rejoice greatly, with joy unspeakable and full of glory. We are coming to know that we know Him (1 John ii. 3) if we believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ. A child knows its parents before it knows that it knows them. We may say we know God before we know Him as Father and Lord; was it not when the consciousness of the Fatherly relation was gone that He cried: "My *God*, my *God*"? Does not the expression "their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in Heaven" (Matt. xviii. 10, 11, 12)* mean that the Being always

* "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven. For the Son of Man is come to save

beholds the Father's face, notwithstanding the separation of conditions, and that the Son of Man came to seek and save the lost or wandering consciousness? You will remember the words that follow: "For the Son of Man is come to save that which was lost." I do not suppose that the little child set in the midst was conscious of his relation to Him; he probably thought Him a kind man; but our Lord proclaimed the oneness of being between Himself and the child, the prophecy of a full consciousness of fellowship in the future.

Lost consciousness of Being.

Three Steps in consciousness.

Do you not think this is true?—

I. We know Him as our Father; that is our Regeneration.

II. We know Him as our Spouse or Counterpart; that is the marriage of the Regeneration.

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that which was lost. How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety-and-nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?"

III. We know Him as the Universal Life in its manifold operations and fruits through us; then we see and know Him in the offspring of His love.

Belief in Jesus Christ.

To believe in Jesus Christ our Lord is, I think:—

(α) To believe His declaration that God is Love.

(β) To believe that all men are His children, bearing in this mortal environment the incorruptible Seed, destined to bring them into full fellowship with their Father.

(γ) To believe that He, as Lord, is now educating by His Spirit the children, whom God hath given Him, to reign with Him, in the saving work of bringing all into the knowledge of the Truth.

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I had a great happiness the other day. A friend, who was led at one time to estimate me as a heretic, wrote "The matter which had so troubled me has burst upon me in clear bright vision, and all is transfigured in its redeeming light." This is that precious truth, which A., B., and C. also think nonsense and error; they make the facts of Being to depend on belief, not belief to depend on the facts. By their teaching the natural man is his own saviour, put it as they will, and after a while the experience of their converts must prove unsatisfactory and must evince the narrowness of Pharisaism. There is only *one* Gospel o

Christ; mankind *is* redeemed, *is* sitting in heavenly places, etc., and we, the members of the race, need to be awakened to the knowledge of the fact, so that we may rejoice in the great joy which is the inheritance of all people. Love is spiritual life; we only live in so far as we love. Selfishness is spiritual death, and many so-called religious systems tend to develop a religious or "other world" selfishness, which is worse than "this world" selfishness. Too much of the Mission-work of the present time seems to be based on the hope of *getting* something, peace, or joy, or heavenly treasures. When real Christianity begins, the welfare of all is seen to be the one object of desire, upon the altar of which universal consummation may the blessed fire of God sanctify each one of us!

I seem to see more and more that signs are substituted for "the thing signified," whether it be the Sign of Bethlehem or the sign of the sacraments. Who preaches or witnesses to "the thing signified" in the Birth which we are now celebrating, that "God is with us," with every member of the race? The historical Jesus is the Sign or

Image as the Epistle to the Hebrews says), but the very thing itself is *the Christ*, the Being of every man, raised in the Person of Jesus to a new manifestation, revealing what is the true Life-Principle of every man. When that truth is grasped and maintained, then will the Son of Man be lifted up in the utterances of His people, then will the Sign be truly worshipped in a loyal recognition of "the Thing signified," viz., "that Holy Thing which is to be born" of every man, "and called the Son of God," of which verily the birth of Jesus of Nazareth is the sign promised in Isaiah vii. 14.* Only in self-abandonment can that birth be effected. Popular religion is pagan, not Christian, self-aggrandizement, not self-abandonment; it is "Grant to me to sit on Thy right or left hand when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom," to which the reply is that self-abandonment is the sovereign greatness of His Kingdom. A. said: "We must be selfish first, secure our

* "Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel."

salvation first, and then think about
g unselfish;" but we shall never really
our own salvation except in the salvation
ll. Short of that it is but Pharisaism, for
a non-recognition of the only ground
which our faith rests, viz., that He is
aviour of all men, and that the complete
ion of the individual is dependent upon
omplete salvation of every member of
nity. How plain this is, and how
y revealed throughout Scripture! Any
led Gospel based upon another founda-
than that of God's universal Love, and
inherent oneness with the Christ, and
itance with the Lord of the spirit of His
is not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus
t.

ever felt the wealth of Christmas teach-
; I have done this year in my solitude.
the half has not yet been told!

Vicarious Sacrifice.

I have been thinking about vicarious Sacrifice. I fancy by those to whom you refer it is wrongly estimated, and that they account the sign of it to be the thing signified. The birth and death of Jesus of Nazareth signified (was not *in itself*) the vicarious sacrifice for sin. The vicarious sacrifice for sin is the life entering into the condition of death (or being made sin) as the being of the human race in its fallen state. The important point to grasp is, that Jesus of Nazareth "brought life and immortality to light." He declared in His own person that which is true of each member of the race, viz., that the life of God is a sacrifice for sin

:very one of the members. And He, Jesus Nazareth, by His maintenance of this de-ation, maintained the birthright of man-d and inherited the blessing predestined the race, which inheritance constitutes n its Elder Brother, the Lord of the verse, in virtue of which Lordship He powers each one of its members to know l stand in his true Being or Birthright, and s brings them into His glory. The Incar-ion opens out what is for ever true, being pledge and the means whereby in our sciousness we can receive it. The Lord's and death are a pledge and picture of Eternal Truth, and a means whereby the ssing of this truth is ministered to our sciousness.

Here is One, Who is qualified for the redemption of the world, being emphatically *the* Son of God, *i.e.*, the one man who was in possession of the Divine mind.

Then comes the temptation as to conduct. Will He use the powers and inheritance upon which He enters as the Son of God in the spirit of obedience, in filial subordination to the Father's *expressed* will to mankind, or in independence of that expression? Will He, in other words, submit Himself to the position of the race under the law, and so redeem it by obedience to the law, or will He act independently of the law, and so leave the race where it lay, and use His powers for Himself and get glory for Himself? The devil tempts Him to do this: He refuses, and in each case submits to that which is written, written as the Law for mankind; "He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, yea, the death of the Cross." He stands in our place, as our representative, and thence for us employs the inheritance of Wisdom, Love, and Power, which belong to Him in His majority (as having attained the full consciousness of Sonship),—the inheritance

of the kingdom of God. "For *our* sakes He became poor that we might be made rich:" "He took our burdens upon Him;" in the one pregnant word of St. Paul, He "humbled" Himself for our sakes.

Looking at the temptation from this point of view, what significance it has in relation to His place as the Redeemer or Saviour of the world, fulfilling all righteousness for us, and, in the second place, warning us against thinking of, or using, our spiritual inheritance as in any way for ourselves! We are in the election only for the Body's sake; only so thinking and so doing do we stand in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thus overcome the wicked one, disowning self and following Christ. And does not His temptation emphatically warn us against self-chosen methods of spiritual action, that is, methods suggested by "appearances," unsanctioned by the pure approval of conscience, which is the "It is written" in the spiritual dispensation, His Word written upon the fleshy tables of the heart?

Life in God the Basis of Faith in Him.

It seems to me that A. and B. are dealing with the Gospel from two planes of observation. A. makes *consciousness* of Being the starting-point of true existence; B., on the other hand, makes Being the foundation of his thoughts on this point. Being must precede and underlie consciousness; we must *be* before we become *conscious* that we *are*. Because Christ is my Being or Life I can become conscious of Christ; I can respond to His call when, through some other member awakened into Life, His Word comes and knocks at my heart and finds a fellow-witness in the conscience. A.'s gospel is excellent

as far as it goes, but he will see some day that his cone stands on the point of individual consciousness, not on the basis of universal Being, that is, upon the creature-consciousness and not upon the Creator-life. A. looks at truth from the limited aspect of external authority and of that inward experience which is realized by himself and some others. B. is looking at truth in the limitless aspect of the light of the universal Life, and discerns the necessary, blessed, and boundless experience to be realized in due time by the creatures of the Faithful Creator. B.'s view does not deny anything that A. sees; A. witnesses to the experience of his own realizations, while B. only disproves the adequacy of A.'s interpretations by transcending them, and leads us beyond his aspirations by a clearer ray of the Sun of Righteousness. Each has his proper gift and measure of experience wherewith to witness. Let us testify what we see, and receive in meekness the testimony of others, only giving a word of kindly warning when anyone rashly ventures on limiting truth to his own view of truth. We all come from God, for we are His offspring; we are all to attain to that

blessed consciousness of Being, when He shall be all in all. Of course higher perceptions of truth will seem to us to be murderous of truth, if we have ventured to conceive of it as conterminous with our limited apprehensions; we must ever be dying to our limited views as we rise into the kingdom of the Lord Who filleth all things. If I have not my Being in God, in whom have I my Being? And what is conscience, that faculty to which we appeal in preaching the Gospel of man's Divine sonship? Naturally we are *dead* children, children who know not their Father. He came to be the Light of the World that we might become living children and know the one True God, Whom to know is life eternal.

I distinguish between Life, which is our Being in God, and Eternal Life, which is the Light of the Life, that is, fellowship with the Author, Substance, and Former of our Being, the Alpha and Omega. It is the heart which needs re-creation; it is the heart which is desperately wicked, not the Being of man. I think a distinction is carefully maintained in Holy Scripture between the Life of the heart

and the Life of the Being: "Lighten Thou my eyes that I sleep not in death." It is the Light of Life we want, to purify or re-create or regenerate our hearts so that we may be the children of Light.

The Death of Self and taking up the Cross.

I felt when reading the Epistle on Sunday that it illustrated what we were considering in relation to the separation of Abraham from Ishmael, and afterwards the offering of Isaac. Abraham to me represents the faithful heart in its education; it must separate itself from the natural self, that which is born after the flesh, and then it must consent to the offering up of the spiritual self, viz., that which is born after the Spirit, for Divine Service. This latter is the taking up the Cross, consenting to be used by God as He thinks best.

If we be "instructed in the Kingdom of Heaven," old truths are ever putting on new and more beautiful foliage and fruitage year by year, and this confirms the trust that healing and sustenance will be found for all times in the One Tree of Life; just according to where

we are standing, its leaves of healing and fruits of moral power minister to our needs. I should dearly love to try and conduct a Lent on "Eternal Aspects of the Lord." Here my Lenten subject is "Discipleship of Christ;" it opens out beautifully as one considers it. At the threshold stands the misapprehended subject of self-denial, or self-disownment as it should be: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny (disown) himself, and take up his cross and follow Me" (Matt. xvi. 24). This is the Strait Gate through which it is so difficult to enter, because we are bent on forcing self through in some form. But self must be disowned at that Gate, and then the life of true sacrifice begins, the agent of which sacrifice is the Holy Ghost; this is the following of the Lord Christ. Before we enter that Gate, self-sacrifice is but an effort to put to death that which is already dead, and to offer to God what He has declared to be dead, corrupt, the sacrifice of darkness. Only the Christ-Life can be acceptable to Him, and when that Life is owned to be our true Being, then in oneness with the Lord ("He that is

Disownment of Self.

joined to the Lord is *One* Spirit") the Holy Fire lays our life down for the brethren, a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God.

True it is, that in the tangled web of the *conditions* of our Being there are dark threads and impenetrable meshes. One's only safety lies in disowning them; they belong to the outward, dead nature, not to our true self, the Life-self hidden with Christ in God. And the way of disowning them and of our extrication from them is indicated in the words, "Mine eyes are ever unto the Lord (the Lord of my Being), and He will pluck my feet out of the net." The Faith which overcame the world was His trust in the Father whereby He became the quickening Spirit of the Race. In spite of all appearances we must hold fast to the Head of the Race, and thus resist the devil, steadfast in the Faith—Jesus Christ our Lord, the Universal Substance and Quickener of Creation.

Spiritual Selfishness.

How wearisome is "religious" or "other world" selfishness! In some respects far more

so than "this world selfishness," because more subtle in its nature and dress, and, I fancy, more deadly in its effect. There is only *one* way of Life, narrow, oh! how narrow, through a gate, oh! how strait! "If any man will be My disciple," he *must* disown self in every form, worldly or religious, and standing in the inward and universal self, take up the Cross for the whole body's sake, as Jesus Christ did in the earthly life. The desire, which you quote, to see, as individuals, our "title clear," is the impulse of the "religious" self, which must be mortified by the Spirit of Life. Real spirituality is not attained until our satisfaction be that He hath taken away the sins of the whole world. This was the resting-place of SS. Paul and John; anything short of it is a satisfaction of the old, not of the new, man, and needs the purifying fire of true charity. When the Love of God is shed abroad in the heart, then there will be no thought of self; our limitations of wood, hay, stubble, must all give way to the consuming Love-Spirit, and we shall by It be saved, that is, made One with the Universal Love.

Two Deaths.

A word upon Heb. ii. 9.* Two deaths are spoken of, (1) the one consequent upon and purposed in the being made a little lower than the angels, (2) the other a sympathetic tasting of death, in relation to everyone, consequent upon and inherent in His being crowned with glory and honour. This intimates a profound and blessed reality. There is first the death of the individual self, whereby we rise into the consciousness of Universal Life; and the crowning with glory and honour brings fellowship in power with the members who are yet in death or mortality, by means of which fellowship the glorified member is able to help the enfeebled mortal member. So Jesus was humbled and died to the individual limitation,† and now

* "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the *suffering of death*, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should *taste death* for every man."

† "Saying, Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but Thine, be done" (Luke xxii. 42).

"And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, He gave up the ghost."

glorified He tastes death with and in every member, redeeming them from death. The misery or sadness of sympathy is the impotence to relieve; what rapture of joy there must be in the sympathy which cannot fail to relieve, and is conscious all the while of its certain and blessed effectiveness! When we pass hence to be with Him on His throne, shall not we, too, necessarily taste the death of others in sympathy, but with no dim vision of hope or despairing sense of impotence, but in "the joy of the Lord," knowing that our tasting death with them is hastening the destruction of their death? I seem to see the rapture there must be in such tasting—aiding the Advent of the Sons into glory.

Recognition of the Truth, and its expression in Conduct.

We must, in thinking of sin, distinguish between "standing" and "conduct;" in other words, between the recognition of truth and the expression of it in conduct. The important thing is the recognition of Truth; if we will only labour to abide in the recognition of Truth, conduct will take care of itself. Conduct *here*, because of the infirmities of the flesh, will ever fall far short of the expression of the Truth; hence we must not judge by the outward appearance. The majority of us, alas! stand in the outward man, and thus we rightly own our sins. But ideally it is all wrong. Regeneration can hardly yet have really taken place for the individual, until he repudiates

his sins as no part of his true self. Anyone standing in the inward man will shrink from all association with that which belongs only to the outward, the garments spotted with the sin. Every time I identify a man with his sins as if they were the outcome of his Being, I crucify Christ. Sins are the manifestations of defective consciousness and conditions.

Sin and Offences.

I wonder if you are feeling the importance of the distinction between "sin" and "offences," a distinction constantly lost sight of, so that men often cherish the former in their efforts to get rid of the latter. If men would but believe in the truth that *the sin is* taken away, instead of whitewashing and painting up the old Adam and attempting to get others to do the same, the coming of the Lord would be apprehended and the glorification of the Son of Man be known in the power of the Holy Ghost.

Forgiveness of Sins.

No sins are reckoned against us by God; on His side they are all put away

—in relation to Him they have no existence. Hence our Lord says (Matt. ix. 2): "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins *have been done away.*" "Son"—for He is speaking to him as to a child of God, and tells him, without any solicitation on his part, an eternal fact, viz.—that his sins have no existence as in the mind or eye of God. The same truth is expressed in the parable of the prodigal son — there is no reckoning of sin against the prodigal on the father's side. I could enlarge with scriptural evidences if necessary. Our sin or error is in assuming that our sins or trespasses have a place in the mind of God. The Lamb of God came to take away this sin or error of the world by revealing the truth, Emmanuel—"even while we were yet sinners Christ died for us," and manifested that God does *not* reckon our trespasses against us. As long as we refuse that testimony we abide in the darkness, we wrap our sins around our minds, and shutting our eyes to the truth, "abide in condemnation." But when we believe in the testimony of Jesus, that God does *not* reckon against us what we have done amiss, then the truth (or uncover-

ing of the fact) makes us free. While we abide in our sins, we shrink from God, we fear or hate Him, and stifle brotherly love; we are dead in our trespasses, which bind us in chains of trouble and fear. Our Lord's Commission is to preach the Gospel to every creature, the Gospel that our sins are put away, are not reckoned against us by God. When the heart recognises this, it inbreathes the atmosphere which develops spiritual life into filial trust and brotherly love, and persevering steadfastly in this faith, it rises out of the unfruitful works of darkness by the power of the Light which is within.

Punishment is education; it must never be identified with guilt. Guilt is gone; if we accept not this, we "abide in darkness and have not the Truth," and shall so continue until the punishment reveals to us our error in the misery of the spiritual darkness, and so works judgment unto Salvation. With the heart we believe *into* righteousness, that is, into the fact or right law as to our relations with God. All can forgive sins who really know the Forgiveness of sins; in and through them the Holy

Spirit worketh. Does not St. Paul refer to this in Gal. vi. 1?* Are not the "spiritual" those who are one with the Lord and Giver of Life?

Sin.

Judgment began when the Light came into the world. Sin is the transgression of the law of our true Being. There are two aspects of sin, (1) the not owning the Truth in relation to our conditions; (2) the not abiding in the Truth in relation to our Being. Do we not start in life with the natural consciousness, that the will of the flesh is our own will, and that if it is not carried out we shall suffer? Afterwards we find that this is the will that belongs to our defective conditions. When our eyes are opened to the truth that the Divine Will is our true will, we are regenerated and stand in our true Will. We look back

* "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."

upon the first perception as false; and thus disown it. It is with the heart that man believes into righteousness; the heart is the seat of the regenerate Will. To go contrary to your faith, or to go beyond your faith, is sin, for faith is the link with God's mind, which perceives His Word. All which is not in harmony with the law of your Being is sin. What we have realized in our consciousness is sure to bring us into conflict with all adverse powers. When raised above them, we are consciously in a position to utilize them; the very things which they have begotten in us are ammunition when we rise to higher ground.

Judgment and Salvation.

I have been taking two courses during Advent, on Judgment and Coming to the Lord. The Purpose of Judgment—Redemption unto Salvation (Isaiah i. 27);* its Method—By the Spirit of the burning zeal

* "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness."

of Love (Isaiah iv. 4);* its All-embr
ness (Rom. xiv. 10);† its Progressi
(John xii. 31, 32).‡ And on Christma
we shall probably consider the we
thought that the Saviour and the Ju
such an one as Jesus of Nazareth, ar
blessedness of His coming to us, to bri
to Him. Salvation and Judgment are
two sides of one work when rightly v
As I read the Gospel, it seems ever to a
and confirm deeper and wider vision of t
embracing Love of the Father of our
and of His Son as the Life and Qui
of all men. We must claim the Ear
the fulness thereof as the Lord's.
friend gives too readily what is the

* "When the Lord shall have washed a
filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have
the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereo
Spirit of Judgment, and by the Spirit of burn

† "But why dost thou judge thy brother?
dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we
stand before the judgment-seat of Christ."

‡ "Now is the judgment of this world: n
the prince of this world be cast out. And I
lifted up from the earth, will draw all men u

to the devil. Let us not make anything short of the Christ to be the Life and Lord of men. Only standing in the Christ can we resist the manifold snares of the evil one. Not in the written Word or in the Church, but only in the Christ, Who is the Wisdom of God and Power of God, is our foundation; all other standings break down sooner or later, even if they be based on the written Word, for that is not the Living Word, but that which speaks of Him Who is the Living Word. We must see God and *die* before we can see Him and *live*. The Epistle of Jude is God's denunciation of sin, the very best tidings we can have when we come to estimate sin aright and our own incapacity for dealing with it.

Future and Present Judgment.

You ask whether I distinguish between "all appearing before the judgment-seat of Christ and receiving the things done in the body," and "each giving account of himself to God." The former seems to me to refer to the future. When, at the close of this existence, we shall

be clothed in the garments of things done here: if His Spirit has done the good work in our hearts, we shall be clothed in the glory of goodness; if the self or sin has done its empty vanities, we shall be clothed with the conscious vanity of the works of the flesh. The word translated "bad" in 2 Cor. v. 10* is rendered "worthless" in Dr. Westcott's amended reading. I think "giving account" of one's self to God goes on now under the action of the conscience.

* "For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in His body, according to that He hath done, whether it be good or bad."

The old and the new Adam.

Having been born children of darkness we shun the Light, for it seems only death to us. We do not yet know its regenerative power—that its death-blow is *unto* resurrection—Life. But if we believe His Word, Who has proved before our eyes the fact, then we can welcome the blows Light gives in the power of the Hope, and though the flesh quivers, yet the inward voice sustains; so that with the agony there is the way of escape, enabling us to bear it. As we keep our eyes on the beauty, destiny, and universality of the new man, the blows upon the old man are less and less painful; the painfulness arises from our lingering love for it. We are in-

clined to think "the old is better" for us, when the New Man comes before us in His wide-reaching inexorable splendour. But as the new faculties are developed by meditation, converse, and service, the new vision comes with sweeter and sweeter congeniality, and enables us more readily to yield to the embrace of the All-loving fire, because we come to know better the Heart whence it springs.

Christ formed in us.

In considering this subject which lies at the root of all spiritual experience, its interpretation and finality, perhaps it will be most helpful if we note for examination the following points :—

I. (i.) The Thing formed.
(ii.) The sphere in which the forming takes place.
(iii.) The Power which forms.
(iv.) The steps in the formation.

II. (i.) The progress of Christian experience.
(ii.) The attitude necessary on our part.

I. (i.) The *Thing* to be formed is the

Christ-character, the germ of which is the Life or Being of men, John i. 9,* the light of which Life is felt in the conscience or inner mind of men. The germination and development of the Christ-germ into the Christ-perception, the Christ-affection, and the Christ-action, constitutes the forming of Christ in us. When we are fully renewed in the spirit of our mind (Rom. xii. 2), and stand fully in the Christ, then shall we be fully alive, fully saturated or indwelt with the spirit of Christ, fully satisfied with the goodness, well-pleasingness, and complete self-effectualizing, of the Will of God, *One-d* with the Lord in thought, feeling, and action; the Seed will have developed its leaf, flower, and fruit. But, as yet, *hiddenly*—in this world our life is hid with the Christ in God, to be manifested with Him in glory in the Heavenly World.

(ii.) The *sphere* in which the forming takes place. This is the inward man of the heart, the feminine part of our nature wherein St. Paul prays that Christ may dwell and be

* "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

formed (Ephes. iii. 16, 17).* The *Magnificat* is the utterance of the awakened heart receiving the Christ-germ into its embrace of faith. The holy Thing born of that reception will ever be called the Son of God.

(iii.) The *power* which forms Christ in us is the Holy Ghost, that quickening Power wherewith the Life-principle or Being of all men is endued (Rom. v. 15, 18).† He it is who sheds abroad the love of God in the heart; in other words, who forms the Christ-consciousness or character in us (Rom. v. 5).‡

* "That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love," etc.

† "But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. Therefore as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."

‡ "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

He is the one Husband to whom St. Paul, a true friend of the Bridegroom, said he had espoused the Corinthians (2 Cor. xi. 2).* It is because we all have one Husband, the Lord-Spirit, that there is unity in the multiplicity of members of the one Body. If we endeavour to form alliances with other spirits than the One Lord-Spirit, we shall only continue in incompleteness and disunion. In that One Lord-Spirit we shall all find our complement, and He will renew us each in the spirit of our minds and make us each perfect in sympathy of perception, affection, and action, with the Head and members of the whole Body.

(iv.) The *steps* in the formation of Christ in us are, I believe, indicated in the details or features of the revealed life of Jesus of Nazareth. We see in that history what the Holy Spirit is effecting inwardly in each one that receives Him. We may receive Him under a variety of names; alas! that people should so quarrel about the name under which we receive Him. Our Scriptures give

* "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one Husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ."

Him many names suited to the various ne
and sympathies of men—Spirit of Holine
Spirit of Truth, Spirit of Power, Spirit
Christ, Spirit of the Son of God, etc.

First there is the outward step of t
angelic salutation ; it may be a chance wo
a sermon, a reading of Scripture, a ceremo
etc., etc. These outward words awaken t
heart to the inward Word or Power, whi
forms in the attentive, obedient, yielding he
"the Holy Thing." Then is the spiritual
generation or new birth in the inner consciou
ness, a gradual becoming alive to the spiritu
world, quite rudimentary at first, like that
the Babe in Bethlehem, and followed
a considerable period of clouded experien
but still a gradual development, as in the thi
years' hidden life. Then comes the clea
vision, as at the Baptism, an advance
consciousness of Sonship, a clearer visi
of the Mind of God, and a wider app
hension of the relations of the creatures
Him and each other, and their destiny, a
the significance of the discipline of
lives, whether in the wilderness, Minist
or Passion — until at last Christ is fu

ned in us, and our spirits, in the full
ısciousness of Sonship, are yielded with
nplete trust into the Hands of our Father.
en Christ is the ALL in us, and when this has
en attained, it only remains for us to be
rn into the Kingdom of Glory—the *outward*
rth, the redemption of the body, to complete
: *inward* new birth and perfect redemption
the heart, thus crowned with glory and
nour, as I understand it. Then comes
: tasting of death for every man (Heb. ii. 9)
h the Lord Jesus, when free from all
akness of heart, which is selfishness, and
weakness of body, which is infirmity, we
ıll dive under the burdens of others and
fil the law of our new Life. Yoked to
m we shall uplift and bear the weary and
ıvy-laden to their Rest, and so on until
rist shall be formed in every member of the
ly and shall be All *in all.* It is when this
rtal shall have put on immortality that
ll be brought to pass (Oh! blessed vision
l blissful occupation in its light!) the
spel truth, that death is swallowed up
victory. Christ then will not only be
ned *in* us, but in some joyous way, more

blessed than we can conceive, Christ will b formed *by* us in the powers of the glorifie Body which fulfils the joy of the Lord.

II. (i.) There are two strongly-marke stages in the *progress* of Christian experience (1) what St. Paul calls the rudimentary c "carnal," which belongs to the babe-state c Christian consciousness, when Christ is know after the flesh, *i.e.*, as I understand the phrase externally, in rites, certain persons, systems localities, books, etc., in some *limited* an *external* way; in fact, in some special aspec short of the Life and the Lord of the Lif of men, the Alpha and the Omega. (2) Th advanced, complete, or "spiritual" stage, a St. Paul calls it; that which feeds not o "milk" but on "strong meat"; that whic judgeth all things; that in which Christ i known as the Life or Being of men, containin in itself the potentiality of the glory wherewit the Lord Jesus is glorified; that in which th Lord Jesus is acknowledged as the Hea over all things, the Visible of the invisibl the Vanquisher of sin, the grave, and hel Whom no darkness or opposition can wit

stand in the march of His redemption of the universe.

(ii.) The *attitude* necessary on our part for the formation of Christ in us. Is it not the simple recognition of, and yielding ourselves wholly to the claims of truth, in *whatever* shape it comes before us? Some, as it seems, can only discern Truth after a deep draught of error, while others appear more quickly to discern it. But *when* discerned, a ready recognition of, and surrender to, its claims, without *thought of consequences*, is the attitude of heart represented in Mary, and is that which secures the blessed union with the Spirit of Truth.

For those who have the angelic office to fulfil towards others, it is needful to remember that our utterances are only really "in the Name of the Lord," if they be the outcome of the *revelation* which He has made to the world, and express the *spirit* of the salutation of Gabriel to Mary to every member of the race. Oh, surely if Christians came a little more "in the Name of the Lord," instead of in the name of their limitations and condemnations, many would say, "Blessed

is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord." We must, as true angels, encourage one another to follow courageously whatever is true to us, endeavouring to deepen the sense of the intimate and dependent relations with the Lord God, which subsist between every one of us and Himself. It is conventionality which stifles spirituality, whether the conventionality be in the fashion of the world, or in the religiosity of the churches. With the look for Light and Power more steadily directed *inwards*, we must, at all hazards, venture forward, and if the eye of the heart be towards the true Lord and Master, His strength will stream in and make the blind to see, the deaf to hear, and the lame to leap as a hart, in *the* way, the Way of holiness. I am sure atheism in respect of the Holy Spirit is the weak point in the churches; for Him external organization and other makeshifts are again and again substituted; having begun "in the Spirit," they attempt to go on "in the flesh."

I am sure we do well to *concentrate* our service. The superficial scraping of a wide area is not the life of Service, and "Bear ye

one another's burdens" is something much deeper and therefore more concentrated than that. In a bustling superficial age like the present one gets so easily under the glamour of bustle, and it exercises, through its deceptive appearance, a hideous force. I suppose that they who are truly Christ-labourers will look idlers to the religious world. But such as these know of ramifications of Life-force hidden to the outward eye. When one comes into contact with the history of a soul like A. B.'s, how it hushes the bustling temper, and shows the solemnity of human life with its intricate sensibilities, the need of patient persistency and the hiddenness of spiritual operations!

Unity of the Spirit.

Unity, in the presen of things, can only be of the Spirit, can only be inward. In the new and the new earth, *i.e.*, in the true c things, there will be outward as well as unity. Then will there be the manifes the body of humiliation will have away, and the Body of glory will in spects witness to the unity of the Spiri true life is now hidden with Christ i we have the inward redemption, the r tion of the heart, in this existence : for its complement, the redemption body. The perfecting of the inward

the accomplishment of the outward; it is the same Spirit which affects both, for the outward redemption is but the triumphant manifestation, in freest exercise, of the new Creation within. All processes of spiritual accomplishment are from the inward to the outward; the Kingdom of God is within us. When the Law of its Life, which is Love, is shed abroad in our hearts, and has become the spring of thought, desire, and impulse, *then* Christ, Who is our Life, dwells fully in our hearts, and the removal of the body of humiliation will be the manifestation, in glory, of the new Man; and so for each individual member until the whole Body be manifested in glory. External unity without inward unity is the whitewashed sepulchre! outward unity is the sure consequence of inward unity. Hence "unity of the Spirit," the inward new Creation of the Holy Spirit, is that which the Apostle entreats us to lay hold of and keep, and this shall we do in the Power of that which alone can bind our hearts together, viz., "peace with God." Only in Christ, Who is our Peace, can we find that Spirit which will cement our hearts into the "unity

of the Spirit,"* and which is the result of standing in Christ. If we stand in Him as the Life and the Light, or Power of the Life of men, as the "All and in all," then we necessarily are in the unity of the Spirit, for we are standing in Him Who is the Centre, the very Heart of the Body, and are therefore in sympathy with every member. The aim then, *now*, is inward unity, which is secured by each member abiding in Christ, the Prince of peace, being servants to no outward or carnal commandment, but only to the inspirations of the Spirit of the Lord of all, Who will build us each up into the inward fellowship, empowering each joint or member to fulfil its own speciality. And then, when the body of humiliation, with its obscuring and separating mortality, is removed, we shall be manifested in the Body of glory, the Glory of the spiritual Body. Our exhortation to all, and our own practice, should be to cling to the Head, Who is the true Head of every man, and by "clinging" I understand persistently recognising

* Ephes. iv. 3: "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

Him to be what He is, the true Life and Law of life of all, and, so recognising Him, to labour to enter into His mind, that we may have His mind or Spirit as the ruling principle in our hearts. So shall we be fed by His Spirit, and be strong in wisdom and power to do His will for all.

We shall never reach the unity of the Spirit by outward organizations; we shall not even be helped on the way to it unless we recognise their true office. They tend to separation without this recognition; for their tendency is to substitute an outward unity or uniformity of action and acceptance of truths for the inward Unity of the Spirit, a golden image for the Living God, an outward visible Church, not as a *witness* to an inward, invisible, universal Church, but as the outward *embodiment* of the inward and invisible Church. So long as organizations or churches are recognised as *methods* for bringing the variously constituted temperaments of mankind into "the knowledge of the Truth," and as being witnesses to the manifold aspects of Truth refracted in the murky atmosphere of this world, they are

beneficial; they become mutually supplemental and witness to an underlying spiritual Unity: but directly an external organization lays claim to a *complete* witness to the Truth, or claims to be itself the visible embodiment of the Church on earth, it becomes, as I understand St. John to teach, antichrist, and, in the nature of things, the mouthpiece of the spirit of antichrist. So I understand, in regard to the churches, that we best promote the "unity of the Spirit" by endeavouring to recognise the measure of Truth to which each organization witnesses, allowing that by the necessity of our present conditions no *one* organization can witness to the whole of Truth, but that all taken together may, as undoubtedly they do, in so far as they set forth some positive aspect of Truth, help to render the witness more perfect. Purity of devotion to that aspect of Truth which constitutes the enthusiasm of each organization will maintain due regard to the diversities of gifts, ministrations, and operations; and loyalty to Him Who gives the manifestation of the Spirit to each one for the welfare of the whole body will be secured.

illustration occurs to me rising out
: conversation we had the other day.
: baptism, no doubt, is an inestimable
is to the universality and freedom of
; but, as a safeguard against the error
nfining the grace to the ceremony of
baptism, it is helpful that there are
:zations in which infant baptism is *not*
sed, wherein we have evidence of the
ice of the grace, witnessed to by
m, without the reception of the cere-
Until we recognise that the true
: of unity is inward now, and outward
ter, there must be the *war* of sects. If
'ruth were recognised, there might be
ace and joy of the manifold organiza-
the peace of receiving, and the joy of
, in the interchange of the knowledge
Truth.

Conscious union with God through the Holy Spirit.

those who worship the Christ after the
He is the Alpha and Omega of Life,
ternal Christ, Who is the Way, the
, and the Life. Do you not think that

these words represent the Trinity of our experience or knowledge of Him, Who is our Lord and God? Sometimes in the sanctuary of one's own experience one knows Him as the Way, *guiding* us so surely; sometimes as the Truth, *satisfying* some aspiration or *unfolding* a blessed hope; and sometimes, again, as the Life, *overcoming* the mortal selfishness and weakness of one's heart. In that blessed, inexorable march of Life, whose genius is Love, all idols sooner or later fall. You ask if I think the whole of Humanity the Incarnation of God. I think I could say the Universe is the Incarnation of God, and that Humanity is the order of that Incarnation which is destined or elected to *union* of Sonship with the Divine Mind or Will, and of that order the Lord Jesus is the One Who has attained to the fulness of union or Personality, as the Son of God. The Spirit of the union, or glory, is the Holy Spirit, Who is bringing us His brethren, compassed with mortality, one by one into the same consciousness of union, or fellowship. And when all the members are thus brought into union with the Head, and

therefore with one another, so that the Christ-consciousness is complete in the Body, then is the Divine idea realized in the Human order of creation, as indicated in 1 Cor. xv. 28: "And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all."

Do we look for Another?

Through sympathy with others, we must, in this disorderly existence, be in constant storms, even while firmly on the Rock. There are so many streams of interpretation, aspiration, fear, etc., eddying round, and we are all in the twilight as yet. You speak of your friends thinking a way open *now* for the gradual reconstruction of the race. But has not that way been open since the exaltation of Jesus, and are we not now coming to a fuller consciousness of this fact? And does not the so-called "reconstruction of the race" consist in the individuals coming to the consciousness that the Race is constructed in beautiful solidarity in God? When I

hink of the race I think of the multitude hich no man can number beyond the veil, nd the comparative few here on earth who re being educated for the things that are to e known. "Being in the spiritual body' s to me an expression equivalent to being n the outward consciousness of spiritual ellowship and operation, just as residence in he physical body secures me outward fellowship and operation in the physical world. You speak in your letter of "waiting for" the next stage as being "selfish" and "unjustifiable." Certainly, if "waiting for" implied a do-nothing attitude it would be devilish; but in my sense of "waiting for" I include that strong expectancy which sets in motion every heart-string and nerve-string in increasing sympathy and effort, *not* in the bustle of the fleshly mind, but in the effective business of fervency in spirit under the guidance of the Lord. Yes, I find in the Christ-revelation that which stimulates my heart into greater and greater activity of sympathy, tenderness, and integrity, while I "look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen." Only by looking at the eternal

while we deal with the transitory can we deal with the transitory in any way that is beneficial. Yet, if any see their way and feel moved to follow the way whereby it is thought that the race can be reconstructed and the earth prepared for the splendour of the second Coming, let them by all means follow it with all their might; they will find that that which they seek to do by special methods is done, and "they knew it not." I seem to see all that is needed for the "preparation for the splendour of the second Coming" in the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit, as I understand it, of perfect man, or complete humanity. We shall all find completeness in Him; "when it (the heart) shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit" (2 Cor. iii. 16-18). This conception seems to me a higher one than that of our friends. More than anything else we want the consciousness of union or One-ness with

universal Human Spirit, which the
kener of the spirits of all flesh gives.
hatever seems to be a better aspect of
Gospel than that which we at present
, must command our love and belief; we
. not fear. If, for a time, we do wander
ıe narrow way in thought, we shall come
. and shall be blest with a deeper, in-
ɜr knowledge of the truth. We must
remember that Truth far transcends
ıpprehension of it.

n laying down the pamphlet you sent
the comment arises: True, "the letter
th;" it is not the god of this world, or
God of the old Testament, or the God of
book, that *we* have to preach, but the
of heaven and earth, Who has spoken and
ared Himself to our own hearts. "The
it quickeneth;" He manifests the true
unto us, and quickens us into able
isters of, or witnesses to, the God of
teousness, peace, and joy. He is the
. Whom the disciples of the Holy Spirit

Who is the Lord our God?

preach, and in so doing commend themse
to every man's conscience. It is not in
dim mists of the old Testament, where
features of His character are blurred by
darkness of human ignorance, that we k
and worship Him; but it is as the Righte
Father, the Faithful Creator, the knowle
of Whom is being written on our hearts (
shall be written on every human mind
heart): not by reflection from tables of st
or books of ink, but by the immediate wri
of the Spirit of the living God.

It seems to me that the shock which
pamphlet gives one, fades into a visio
the Sword of the Lord destroying an
which is standing in the way of the knowle
of the one true God, only adequately to
known in the way specified in John xiv.
22.* To the regenerate many things
quite clear that by the unregenerate are

* "He that hath My commandments, and ke
them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that lovet
shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him
will manifest Myself unto him. Judas saith unto
not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that Thou wilt ma
Thyself unto us, and not unto the world?"

ood, because of the flesh; and among
the difficulty concerning the Nativity
s Christ alluded to in the pamphlet.
oly Spirit is the true Spouse of the
heart, of Whom Gabriel was the
or external witness. Fornication is
ding of the human heart to any other
e Holy Spirit. In the destruction
present miserable misconceptions of
must not be surprised at hard blows
igh handling; but, dearest friend,
gold of Truth will come out and the
of God be magnified. The *one* thing
l support us in the confusion and
of the conflict is zeal for the Name
one true God; if we have any other
ism than that, we shall be over-
l with our idol. On the rock of
ve can face and withstand all the
of this life, in the Power of the Faith,
and Love, which spring out of that

Life to be sought—not its manifestation.

We ought not to
our time in considering what should b
manifestation of the Spiritual Life. It i
considering what leaves we are to put
oak tree; let it put on its own proper l
In filial submission and commendati
our hearts to the indwelling Spirit, p
leaves and fruit *must* be the result, wher
thinking about what leaves and fruit we s
put on we are falling back into carnal re
and leaving the spiritual: "Which of y
taking thought can add one cubit un
stature?" No; the true line is to "see
kingdom of God and *His* righteousnes
all these things shall be added unto

I doubt if the fruit of the Spirit is ever manifested here: it is felt, not manifested. The works of the flesh are manifested (Gal. v. 19); the fruit of the Spirit is felt and tasted. In the beautiful age to come, in the spiritual Body, the fruit of the Spirit will be manifested, never till then. Witnessing is a much safer word than manifesting; we can witness to the fruitfulness of the Spirit, but not yet manifest His fruit. I think you will discern the profound importance of the distinction.

I am glad that you and G. are at one with my spirit on the point. I have a dread of appearing captious, and yet the appearance of captiousness must be faced in loyalty to our perceptions, i.e., our apprehensions of Truth. Loyalty to Him compels utterance; recognition of our imperfect sight necessitates the utterance being made in meekness. Fruit cannot be hung on from without; it must be the spontaneous expression of the inward activity. Hence it is well and necessary, I fancy, to spirituality, to think and speak little of manifestation, but to think and speak much of faithfulness of heart to the moving of the Spirit. The Husbandman will take

care of the manifestation; *we* have to give ourselves to the hidden Life, so that it may flow on and grow, unchecked by neglect. We do indeed need to cling to the spiritual standpoint, that is, "the Faith," with steadfast agony of loyalty. It is an inward Law of Life, like the sap in the vegetable world; hence our Lord's parables, which have an abiding significance as expressive of the new Creation, are taken mostly from the vegetable world, seeds and vine. The old Testament symbolism of the potter and the clay indicates a law outside, moulding outwardly a form; the New, a law of Life within regenerating, and expressing the glory of the regenerated nature.

The spiritual Life, being Love, cannot be thinking how to manifest itself; like Nature it knows no vacuum, but rushes in, necessarily and spontaneously, wherever it finds a door open. It is essentially unartificial, unconventional, essentially free, being Divine.

The present Evidences of Christianity spiritual.

With regard to "not believing in Jesus Christ *because* of His miracles," I think the

path of Faith or belief in Jesus Christ lies, as it were, in two planes, a lower and a higher. (1) We believe in Him *because* of His miracles, which we accept on the authority of Church, or Scripture, or teacher; (2) we believe in the miracles *because* we believe in Him; then they are no longer miracles but natural outcomes or signs of His power in relation to distress, etc. Confusion arises from writers and speakers doing insufficient justice to these two attitudes of belief in relation to Christ, the first rudimentary, or "carnal" in Scripture language, the second complete and "spiritual"—the apprehension of the "babe" and the "adult" in Christ. I am quite sure that the evidence to the Christ will become less and less historical, and more and more spiritual or personal; by "personal," I mean, through living persons awakening the spiritual consciousness in others by the power of the awakened consciousness in themselves. St. Thomas's confession of faith, based upon the evidence of the outward senses, did not indicate the full apprehension of Christ. He saw and owned Him to be *his* Lord and *his* God; that conviction was brought to him by sight,

but the recognition that he is the Lord and God of *all* can only come to us inwardly; it cannot be evidenced to the sight in this order of things. All belief based on outward evidence tends to sectarianism. The universal perception comes from the Word heard within, and that is the full blessedness.

I have not by me a copy of the book you refer to, but I should say that the *evidence* of the Resurrection in after ages, according to the teaching of our Lord and the apostles was to be the energetic action of the Spirit of the Risen Lord in the believing members. I should distrust an appeal to an historical fact long past. I fail to see how the historical fact of the Resurrection can be spoken of *now* as *the* evidence of Jesus Christ being the living Lord. It *was* an evidence to the first believers, and it *is* an evidence to all who believe it took place. But surely there must be other evidence accessible besides the historical Resurrection, to witness to the presence of One who is as really present now as in the days of His flesh. I am sure that the great stress laid upon the outward and carnal evidences of the past proves that so

believers have not attained to the ledge of the spiritual evidences of the ıt. The present scepticism, I believe, is ng out this shortcoming; it is driving ım the carnal to the spiritual, from the ; that are behind to those that are ıl. The Resurrection, rightly understood, : Quickening Spirit of our God raising hearts "to things which are above," s into the Body of Glory. The more we ı Him Who is the Resurrection, the less we be thrown back upon the rudimentary of history. See Heb. vi. 11, 12.* Some e are dealing with a dead Christ, instead aling with, or, rather, being dealt with ıe living Christ. They dwell in doctrines : a Person Who once lived on earth, ıd of coming to know the Person Who w living amongst us and is in beneficent on with every single creature on the

And we desire that every one of you do show me diligence to the full assurance of hope unto ıd: That ye be not slothful, but followers of who, through faith and patience, inherit the ses."

Yes, a creed of facts and doctrines, with which we have intellectual but not spiritual, theoretical but not vital, relations, is deadly, —with Lazaruses at our door all unperceived. Not until we are born of the Spiritual and Universal Life can we be alive to the vibrations of another's life, and anticipate the expressions of a burdened heart by our side. I can only say: "Quicken, O Lord, Thy children, and enlighten mine eyes that I sleep not in death." May He replenish us with a deep discernment and tenderest sympathy in our intercourse with the woe-begone solitaries beside our path!

"I am the Resurrection and the Life."

The True idea of the Resurrection is the process or power which lifts life into higher consciousness; our Lord said to Martha: "I am the Resurrection as well as the Life." Because of the conditions we are in, though we have Life, we want the Power which raises that Life into its true conditions. We know Him as the Life before we know Him as the Resurrection. Knowing Him as both seems

o be knowing Him as All in all. Whenver the Lord says, "I am," He speaks is ideal Man, as the Life, holding the power of Self-manifestation. What we see in Him is potentially in us, or we could not see it in Him. We may say we are what He is, because He is the representative of the true Man in every man. By His Incarnation this was brought into our consciousness. All are in Him by virtue of their Being, but He makes us aware of what we are. He, Who comes into this external relationship with us, is He Who is also the substance of our Being. He is the expression of the hidden Being of all, and the promise also that each shall rise into the full consciousness of their Being, and be able to say, as did Jesus when on earth: "I and the Father are One Thing." And by virtue of what He is to each one of us, He is the Power whereby we come to know what we are, and whereby we are raised out of our imperfect conditions into His own perfect conditions. We are dead, or out of fellowship, when we know not the Truth in respect of God and our fellow-creatures. To be out

of fellowship is to be in the condition of mortality. Jesus said: "He that believeth on Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:" to live is to come into the knowledge and fellowship of God and of our fellow-creatures, and whosoever has come into this, and stands in it, shall never die. Believing this as a fact, and believing into full fellowship with its significance, are two different things. Only when we are *One-d* with Him can we enter into the meaning of "I am the Resurrection and the Life." The more I realize the fact that I am in immediate contact with all expressed in Jesus, the more I find the same things are being established in my experience.

Spiritual things visible only to the spiritual eye.

Again and again it comes home to me that true wisdom lies in the abiding recognition that spiritual things are *spiritually* discerned. If we labour for the meat which perisheth not, and if we witness to the Kingdom of God in word and deed, our labour and our witness *must* be in the Spirit, i.e., *by* and *to* the Spirit.

Signs and wonders.

Carnality, as all spiritual writers have ever intained, is the bugbear of true religion, d I understand the most inveterate and ost insidious form of carnality to be the eking after "signs" in the phenomenal rld as spiritual evidences (1 Cor. i. 22, 23).* rist crucified certainly was a "stumbling-ock" to a Jew sign-seeker, for it spoke to n of weakness and defect rather than of wer and victory, but to the believer it was e Power of God.

"Signs" are for unbelievers, not believers,† arrest attention; they are not for edifica-n, they belong to a rudimentary condition. nean by "signs" *outward* wonders. This tward world is not God's world; *His* world, order, underlies the visible world, which is e kingdom of disorder; and wonders in the gdom of disorder do not much occupy the ention of the spiritually minded. Indeed,

* "For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek r wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks ishness."

† "Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that eve, but to them that believe not" (1 Cor. xiv. 22).

when these do notice them, they generally discover in them exactly the opposite meaning to that which the superficial observers discover, as in the case of the "Christ crucified" in 1 Cor. i. 23 mentioned above. It makes one shiver when people talk, as they often do, of the *manifest* tokens of the Spirit's presence in Missions, etc., etc.; such outward manifestations are very doubtful in their significance, and emphasis given to them suggests a doubt of the abidingness and hiddenness of the Spirit's presence (John xiv. 16, 17).* The single eye is one that pierces through the outward veil into the Kingdom where Love is ever operating, and where its operations are felt in the Spirit and are exercised in the unobtrusive but most heavenly form of considerate sympathy in utterance, perception, or action: meeting the necessities of another: anticipating their announcement.

* "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever: Even the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you and shall be in you."

The Mind of the Spirit.

ave been much struck in my profes-
life with what I think I may call the
ity with which questions touching the
world have generally been treated.
ıal-mindedness will necessarily be re-
for meekness, gentleness, sweet reason-
ɛss, and self-restraint are of the fruit of the
; and sweet reasonableness or forbear-
is what the spiritually-minded, accord-
the Apostle, will make known unto all
Phil. iv. 5).* The bustle in the religious
for saving souls has necessarily much of
ality, and, consequently, vulgarity in it.
a remedy for excess of externality is to
nd in more calmness, retirement, and
ion upon the spiritual side of things.
denness seems so inseparable a cha-
stic of the Holy Spirit's work, that one
t but fear lest some of the efforts to
n outsiders, and to stimulate the newly
ned, may hinder or mar His work. I
t associate the work of sanctification
xcitement and hurry. We are too apt

,et your *forbearance* (R.V.) be known unto all

to sacrifice depth for demonstration, and there is ever the charge of "quietism" ready wherewith to taunt the disciple of the Holy Spirit. It seems to me that quietism (I will use the taunting word) fairly indicates the true attitude of the *heart* and *mind* as in relation to the Holy Spirit, while, on the other hand, a wise, wide-embracing, and enduring service marks the *conduct* of a faithful servant of the Holy Spirit towards his fellows. It is because the Holy Spirit is wise, tender, and mighty, that His servants are never aught but effective and energetic, though they come not forth with outward show.

Large Religious Meetings.

On my journey I read the report of the great M. Meeting. It seemed all very good, but I am not able to see that what purposes to be more advanced teaching can be advantageously carried on in great gatherings. For awakening they seem fitting; for advancement or edification in the true sense of the word they seem to be prejudicial, and to leave with one the sense of "jargon." When the Holy Spirit has been recognised by the heart and

as the true Lord and Master, then we
ɔetter interfere with one another as little
ɔssible, except in the way of ceaseless
.al encouragement to be true to Him at
ɔsts, each following what he feels to be
nind of the Spirit. First, we must each
. our own weakness; to this end the dis-
ıe of life is incisively effective; and
ıdly, we come to learn that our true
ıgth is in Him, and continuously advance
.e knowledge of how great that Strength
ı the way of insight, tenderness, and
ɜr.

feel sensitively the effect of London life; London life.
ems to stifle the strugglings of the better
Its glamour, rush, and a variety of in-
ıts, so awaken and in a sense intoxicate the
ɾard appetites, that the Seed is hindered
he surface-growth of weeds. One finds a
erness of weed-feelings of envy, ambition,
lemnation, disgust of the apparently com-
ıplace, sentimental compassion, etc., etc.,
ɜry nightmare-ish, and anything but sooth-
or invigorating to the Spiritual Life.

The Kingdom of God not manifest.

Do you not think that the evidences for the Christian Religion lie chiefly in the conscience, and that the external ones are really exhausted? Butler and Paley have travelled over them, and have presented us with as much as can be learnt through them, and that much is quite of a rudimentary character. The power of the Christian revelation rightly apprehended is in the emotions it excites and the solutions it provides for the problems of life, and it begets in us a new power of insight, endurance, and wide-reaching sympathy; yet there will not perhaps be much to arrest observation. The purpose of the Kingdom of God now, as far as I can see, is not to improve the world, but to educate mankind in the world for the New heaven and New earth, wherein dwelleth Righteousness. At the end of this age the Kingdom of God will be *manifested* in some way that we cannot yet picture, but now it "cometh not with observation," but the general treatment of Evidences seems to intimate that it *does;* hence the formalism of religion and the little spirituality. If the Son of Man came, would He find the *faith* on the earth? He would be

surrounded with the *form*, but would He not quickly declare the absence of the *power* of godliness? Only in the inward can the Universal Truth be found. The outward view of things develops sectarianism and formalism; the inward view develops true Catholicism, true Spirituality, extends the Kingdom of God in the heart and mind, which is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Because Christ is our Life we can know Him.

I am rejoicing that you feel the sphere of Christian Evidences to be chiefly in the Spiritual world. I am sure St. Paul felt this strongly (2 Cor. iv. 16, 17, 18);* and in many other places we catch the same instinct, and all through St. John's first Epistle. And

* "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

our Lord's words are ever deprecating the demand for outward evidences, connecting it with the phrase "evil and adulterous" (Matt. xvi. 4);* that is to say, a resting upon manifestations in that outward world which is under the power of the evil one is "adulterous" as in relation to our true Spouse, Whose Face and Law of Life we discern and embrace, not in the outward and transitory, but in the inward and eternal. His Revelation is unique in its origin, for it is not of this world—"the prince of this world hath no part in Me"—and it commends itself to universal acceptance because it is rooted in our Being, is latent in all, and has only to be known. Faith cometh by hearing (faith is the spiritual vision of the nature of our Being); the grace of Christ-nature is ours, before we know it to be ours, and *because* it is ours, *therefore* we can know it. It seems almost foolish to state such a clear necessity, but teachers are ever speaking as if the vision, or belief, of the believer, were the origin of the power of sight. It is because the Christ-

* "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign."

Revelation appeals to what is universal and corresponds to the universal cry, that it is God's Eternal Word to His creatures, and will be so accepted, as it is more and more faithfully maintained in its universal significance.

Inward Development—not Manifestation.

Yes, I quite believe that the purpose of the Christian Revelation is to develop the incorruptible Seed's life in the heart, not to clothe mankind from without in a religious or fancied Christ-like garb. The great thing is to be true. Only such an one is Christ-like, and oh, how hard it is to be true! But the Spirit of Truth *will* guide us into all Truth.

ition
the
ard to
ward.

With regard to the case you describe to me, I think my reflections come under two heads. (1) A B is in bondage to a misapprehension about God and about sin, and consequently his life is in confusion. He prays in order to keep God from deserting him, not in order that he may more fully know God, His Love towards us and His Will concerning us. But he is dissatisfied with his present standing and seeks for a better. His letter represents a state very familiar to me, and indicates a passing onward from standing in the outward occupations as constituting religion to standing in

inward union with God in Christ, of ch the outward occupations of religion are natural and powerful expressions. His ntion should be withdrawn from outward ; and conducted to the inward fact of our ıding in Christ. The ground that is felt be shifting downwards is, I am sure, ting upwards, because the mind is passing n the outward garb of religion to the ard Spring of religion, wherein lies the y immovable, energizing foundation of liness. (2) We must distinguish between *reigning*, and sin *dwelling* in us. Sin gns within us when we yield to it as a king, l, without dispute, follow its behests. nsequently St. Paul says (Rom. vi. 12), et not sin therefore *reign* in your mortal ly, that ye should obey it without resist- e as your master." In Rom. vii. he says, in *dwelleth* in me," which is a very ferent thing from sin *reigning*. I cannot ct sin out of me, but I can check its ending its power of darkness over me, and s I do by standing fast in the Faith, which he blessed fact that there is in me another ture or Principle, which it, *i.e.*, sin, cannot

touch. In this mortal body of mine there is this other Kingdom sown, the Kingdom of God, over which the sinful principle can have no power. Only let the heart be true to this fact, and the Spirit or Light of Life of that Kingdom will quicken our mortal body, (Rom. viii. 1, 2, 11),* and gradually extend its reign of Light. Then the heart will be gradually made free by the Truth and be One Spirit with its Lord. As long as we have these mortal bodies, sin will dwell in us, but reign it will not, if we dispute and ignore its workings by giving our attention to the new standing in Christ. Consequently I should say to your correspondent, all that you perceive and tell me just shows you wha naturally you are, and moves you to cry out "O wretched man that I am, who sha

* "There is therefore now no condemnation them which are in Christ Jesus. For the law of t Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free fro the law of sin and death. . . . But if the Spirit Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in yo He that raised up Christ from the dead shall a quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwell in you."

liver me from the body of this death?"
ow, don't yield to that, don't let that
perience make you give up; that would
allowing sin to reign in your body of
ath. But turn your heart in gratitude to
e New nature and give God thanks. We
this when we clutch in heart and mind
nstantly the blessed incorruptible Seed of
e New nature in Christ Jesus, which is
ow contending with the sinful tendency that
velleth in us, and will finally be declared
be the Conqueror, when this mortal shall
it on immortality in the new Body. All
at you feel means that God is calling you
a truer standpoint, from the law of
itward ordinances to the liberty of the
ruth. And from this standpoint all your
itward occupation of religion will be more
ie because more spontaneous—it will be
e outcome of His Spirit and your fellowship
th Him. I hope I have said what comes
ome to your own heart; it is not so easy to
eak *of* a case as *to* a case, and hence I may
confused to you. Yet I feel that your
mpathy and insight will interpret and meet
iat I say.

The guiding and indwelling Spirit.

The Lord will speed in the best and surest way the footsteps of His children. Clearer and clearer it comes home to one that He, in these our days of ignorance and weakness, guides and upholds His little ones, and does all that is truly done by them, who know not whither they go, like Abraham of old. In the next condition they shall know even as they are known.

Religiosity and Spirituality.

Is there not a danger of religiosity smothering Spirituality? There is a sort of monster, which is self, clothed in spiritually-coloured garments, and which seems to me to be fostered in its most subtle form in religiosity.

"Be still, and know that I am God."

I am all in a jumble about the Conference. Perhaps it is the confusion resulting from the collision of such widely different methods. "*Be still*, and know that I am God" has so become the habitual method to me, that

hese exhortations to *expect* this and that, or o *realize* this and that, or to *do* this and that, ither in imitation of Biblical incidents, or ecause others have found it useful, seem to ne likely to introduce bewildering elements nto the spiritual life, and "Follow Me" eems crowded out. We may help to point ut where that "Me" is to be found, and we nay encourage by the knowledge of Him hich we may have attained; but to interfere s little as possible with the details of the 'following" seems truest wisdom. To ncourage with the "Come and see," and 'Come on," "Come on," is perhaps the true xpression of the service one can render to nother in spiritual things. There are many Babels all along the spiritual life, but it is lways restful to fall back upon the blessed irst Principles: that He is all-embracing ove, we are His offspring, His Spirit of Visdom and Power is our inheritance to bring s into perfect fellowship with Him. *There* our standing in Christ, and, standing there, e must be, consciously or unconsciously, tnessing to Him. Until He drew me into at standing I knew not what complete trust

in Him and fellowship with the brethren meant.

Would that you could sleep for a week, for He giveth to His beloved "during" sleep—so says a good rendering of that verse in the Psalms. And remember that the two pillars of earthly existence are Hope and sleep. We are lost sheep without those two, estranged from God and irresponsive to our fellow-creatures.

How well I know and have felt the religiosity, or religious artificiality, that hinders spirituality. It develops a carnal spiritism, a very real foe to the Holy Spirit, and one that tends to the quenching of the Spirit. I fancy the life called "religious" is especially open to this danger, from its tendency to develop over-much thought about one's own spiritual growth and to foster artificial methods for its increase. Many doubtless do develop spiritually, in spite of the special and subtle diffi-

ilties it throws in their way, but few, I fancy, :e really helped for long by the facilities it eems to afford.

I am perfectly able to enjoy ritualism and æsthetic development of religious ceremony for the purpose of stirring emotion or "amusement." I value that word, so common amongst religious people abroad; the exclamation on your return from a Function is often: "I hope *Monsieur s'est bien amusé.*" But directly the histrionic or æsthetic is spoken of as giving honour to God in any other respect than as edifying or "amusing" His children, then I think the border-line of Truth has been transgressed. The true and highest ritual of Christian life is, as St. James says, "to *visit the fatherless and widows* in their affliction, and to *make no alliance with* the world." Ritual.

Yesterday our thoughts were occupied by Standing in the Truth.

the New, *i.e.*, the true, Creation—that or
beautiful Creation which unfolds its wo
behind this mortal disorderly veil. How f
us are "on the Lord's Day" in the spirit o
Day! Hence how little we have to tell o
new heaven and new earth, which any o
us might see as did St. John, if only we
standing as he did. But that "False prop
and "that Beast" are bewitching human h
all around, and oh! how one is one's
bewitched by the false utterance and ap
ance of this outward lying world! It is
touching to see those who are *drunk* wit
outward appearances, attempting to pu
world straight. How can we deal in any
helpfully with a lie as long as we believe
be truth? Yet that is being done, and
doing of it is called Christianity; surel
dinary Christianity really claims a vi
for the devil *in its limitations of the pow*
Christ, consequently it has no *sure* gr
of hope, but is inextricably entangled
the lying appearance; the result of v
is that the churches do again and
"crucify the Son of God afresh." We
stand in Christ when we assert the abs

vereignty of God's purpose of Love for the *hole* Creation, and in the Power which flows ıt of that belief we battle with the lying ppearance. Do we not worship the lie by ccounting it, and dealing with it as, the eality, and do we not deny the Truth by ccounting it, and dealing with it as, the ossibility?

Vision sacrificed to intellect.

I have only read part of C.'s book. I ink it is wordy, but congenial in the general rift. A variety of reading in Philosophy nds, I think, to confusion or superficiality; ıe gets confused in a variety of terms eaning often much the same really, and e spends so much time in other persons' oughts, that one has no clear perceptions one's own. The temptation is the ever-urring literary one, to travel over much ıntry but to dig deeply in none. Hence hidden Rock is not struck, and Vision sacrificed to learning, to knowing what ers have seen.

Sensuous emotion and Spiritual emotion.

I can enter with sympathetic amusen into the horror and wonder of the positio matters between A and B. The emoti so thoroughly misapprehends the ratio that active thing sharper than any two-ed sword, which seems to pierce even to dividing of bone and spirit, joints marrow. Even so the illuminated rea *kills* (as you say B does A) the emoti in its rudimentary stage of sensuous relig Sensuous religion I understand to be pursuit of peace and joy, and shrinking f the punishment of sin; but it kills sensuous-emotional in order to raise the s tual-emotional, which is the passionate l of Truth because of its wondrous beauty all-comprehensive and effectual Love. must die to the sensuous religion (taker as it is with self-peace, self-joy, indivi salvation) in order to live to the spiri emotion with its characteristic enthusias the peace, the joy, the salvation, of All hat is the enthusiasm of our Lord Saviour (1 Tim. ii. 3, 4).* Have you not

* "For this is good and acceptable in the sig

ıe Bible explanation of the saving Baptism, ı *State*, not an act or ceremony? St. Peter calls it (1 Peter iii. 21) "the interrogation of a good conscience toward God," the questioning habit which belongs to a good conscience and brings us further and further into fellowship with God, which takes nothing on external authority of Church or Bible without pursuing it with ceaseless interrogations or questionings, until it has found the Truth of the Living God in every statement. Doubtless B's utterances smack rather of the unemotional-rational, but for the most part, as I understand him, they express thoughts which take us into the spiritual region, where the clear, rational perception of the only intelligible God, the absolute and universal Love, awakens the spiritual emotions in His Children, who become concerned with nought but the honour of the Name of their Lord God and His blessed Purpose for the universe.

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od our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, ıd to come unto the knowledge of the truth."

Improving the World.

You question my saying that I do not think the purpose of the kingdom of God is to *improve* the world, but to gather people out of the world for the new heaven and new earth. It seems to me that the true World or Order has to be redeemed and saved or Regenerated out of this miserable disorder. This disorder is radically wrong, but it is a sphere in which the materials of the true order or world can be educated or fitted for the true Order. This world is in the wicked or wrong principle, it is saturated with it. When the mind has caught sight of the true order or God's world which He loveth, then this phenomenal world

is seen to be a miserable vesture, and no amount of trimming or patching can make it God's world. Rom. viii. 5-9, and 1 Cor. ii. 6-15, illustrate what I mean, and in Mark viii. 38 the "adulterous generation" is one not true to its Spouse, who is the Truth. We at first want to galvanize the death or mortality with which we are so familiar; but Resurrection is the Divine rule for us all: out of death into Life. We want to mend death, to improve it, and oh, how little comes of it all! Let the Better Hope open our hearts, and there will come in the fragrance and power of the New heaven and New earth. If anyone feels drawn to look into the deep things of God, he must *labour*. Are we qualified in any sense helpfully to deal with the misery of sin until we are replenished with the subtle tenderness of sympathy and the masterful power of an absolute confidence in the supremacy of Good?

Two principles of interpretation weigh very heavily with me just now: (1) that the outward appearance is altogether untrustworthy, and for the most part contradicts truth; (2) that until we see a principle to be *universally* true, we do not see it accurately or fully, *i.e.*,

"in God." Sectarianism comes from bad sight; the eye is not single. Those who are not catholics in the true sense do not look at things in the proportion of the faith. If people expect to see *this* world put right or improved, then they must have some very different conception of this world and its purposes from those our Teacher had. To make school Home it must be *radically* altered the whole order of *this* world must be destroyed. You cannot really improve a school into a Home; the relationships in each are fundamentally different. It is all, as far as I can see, summed up in the words "Though death into Life;" through the tribulation of the world into the Peace and Joy of Home.

Is our Religion rightly based?

More and more it seems to
: current so-called Christian preaching
rk are wrongly based ; based upon the
upon the Gospel, therefore they are not
; based upon angelic ordinances, not
e Christ. They belong to the dispensa-
he past, not to that which *is*. The crash
ıg which will make this yet more ap-
These confusions between ritual and
ɔ, between form and Substance, all
om a faultiness in the foundation.
: religion does not take its spring from
ɜaled God, in fellowship with Whom is
Life, but from all sorts of theories and
nts for making God favourable to us.

So the teaching of our Lord is inverted, and His revelation practically denied. The air is crowded with fictions, and spirituality is smothered, and the Faith is hardly found upon the earth. "Woe! woe!" seems to be the note for the prophet to strike again and again in his message to the Churches, for how often are they starving the flocks, giving them stones for bread!

Current Christian teaching.

The current Christian religion is based on the outward conditions, not on *Being*; in time, not in Eternity; in appearances, not in Reality; in the world, not in God. The foundation is defective, and until that is more adequately apprehended, all this superficial bustle of religious talk and action must be most unsatisfactory and insufficient.

Do you not think that the "indifference to His holiness, and irresponsiveness to His purpose for us," is partly owing to the mawkish and insipid ideas which have been set forth as belonging to holiness? I would call such holiness a holiness of *in*humanity.

ng as we are under the guidance of whether we call them good angels angels, we are in sin or separation. hen we worship God in Spirit and h, inwardly and knowingly, are we ness and Righteousness. All sacra- ;m connotes a state of separation, may separate us from God while it to bring us nearer to Him. While we udaism, *i.e.*, under deputies or angels, .rtial separation, it has its transitory t only so far as it is recognised to mentary and not belonging to the e or spiritual man. Ceremonials may the Truth to which they are to and will surely do so if they are not ıs outward signs of universal Facts.

Subjection to Angels.

:rue, it *is* a mighty step out of death when any one feels the need of for- ;, of "inward cleansing," for truly that 'st step in coming to Christ. But then *'ian* is one who *has* found a freedom ı and death, in Christ, whose hunger

The New Creation.

and must be being satisfied in Him, not because he believes the historical fact respecting Christ, but because he believes in Christ. A person becomes a Christian when he becomes *One with the Lord*, when the Spirit of Christ is alive in him, and the Christ-consciousness is becoming his consciousness. Do you not think that in all stages short of this we are members who have some information about Christ? But in the *knowing* Christ after the spirit one sees and knows Him as the Life and Lord of the Race. All things have become new: how few so-called Christians know what the new Creation means! For if any man be in Christ he *is* a new creature. He cannot but know something of what it means, and rejoice in the knowledge.

[illegible] The word is assurance. I suppose that our friends mean by it an assurance that they are reconciled to the Lord; or perhaps an assurance that He will receive them is meant. Well, they both come to the same thing, for when we are *sure* that He will

:eive us, our hearts are converted to Him, · we are knowing Him aright. The first int to note is, that assurance must be ɔted in God, not in our feelings in respect anything in ourselves, for these are subject all kinds of changes. What are the grounds assurance? First, God's *promises* or ıtements, as: "He that cometh unto me, I ll in no wise cast him out"; or, "God was in hrist reconciling the world unto Himself, ɔt reckoning their trespasses unto them" · Cor. v. 19). Secondly, God's *Character;* ;e is that He is, viz., All-embracing Love: on ıis ground there is complete assurance that [e will receive us all and never leave us, ıd will do the very best for all in the very est way. Thirdly, there is the assurance of *irect insight* into the mind of God by the [oly Spirit: "We have the mind of Christ" ı Cor. ii. 16); "Eye hath not seen, nor ar heard, neither have entered into the heart f man, the things which God hath prepared ɔr them that love Him. But God hath re-ealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the pirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things f God. For what man knoweth the things

of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. ii. 9, 10, 11); "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things" (1 John ii. 20); "And hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us" (1 John iii. 24). This last assurance is the highest of the three, and I should be inclined to call this "the joy of the Holy Ghost," a constant *vision* into the mind or purposes of God, accompanied with the sense of fellowship with Him in *effectualizing* the purposes of His Love. Assurance I understand to be *rest* of mind and heart in the Lord, that Peace which is to be found in Him in the midst of storms of tribulation, temptation, weakness, etc., crowned with the Joy of Hope.

Rest in the Purpose of God.

For myself, I find *rest* only in the vision of the Character, Order, and Purpose of God. The more I enter into the real meaning of Love, and see its Sovereignty of power and Universality of embrace, the more I find rest.

all thoughts then converge in the Hope
h transfigures the apparently ghastly
ent, and stimulates a strong enduring
nce (*i.e.*, scriptural *meekness*) that accele-
, perhaps quite hiddenly, the realization
e sure and certain Hope of Universal
onality for the Race in the Light and
vity of Love, and through it, for the Joy
l possible creations at present beyond our
on.

hen we are very tired we must "shiver;"
we can and do warm one another, when
trengthen in one another the conviction
we *are all* in solidarity with Him, Who
e Wisdom, Love, and Power of the
erse, and *are* instruments in His Hands
he bringing of all into the Rest of the
nal Sunshine. It is in the self-disown-
t which the Light of His countenance
uces, that Rest is found; and so, though
ardly one lives in the city of confusion,
nwardly one is in the Jerusalem, and by
w of Love may carry an olive-branch
ope and Peace to those who are over-
med with the confusion of this disorder.
! the Church, which was intended to

witness to that inward order, has left its Rock, and has become itself a Babylon, and thus the poor world is without a beacon. Yet, tossed about and torn as it is, it has in it the seed of Eternal Light and Love, and therefore cannot be utterly wrecked.

You allude to the parable of the Virgins. I am quite sure that the "prudent" Virgins have learnt, *within* that door, that their union with the Bridegroom qualifies them to give oil to *all*, for, in virtue of that Union, the supply can never run short, as, according to their previous imperfect apprehension, they feared it might. But after the closing of the door of the *legal* dispensation such an apprehension gives way to the better Hope, whose instinct is ever to *give* of the Exhaustless Life.

I did not say that all men, :ue of their manhood, are in Christ. ust observe the Pauline and Johannine :tion between the phrases "Christ in nd "We in Christ," and "Christ dwell- us." Christ is in all men, as the Being :n, that which constitutes them the ng of God; but only believers in Christ ı Christ. They are those in whom *dwells*, diffusing, as it were, the con- ness of the Christ-nature in heart and so that perception and action are *in* "Christ is being formed in them:" ed to the Lord, they are One Spirit." men believe in Christ, they are *at-two*

Christ is in all; believers are in Christ.

with their true nature, and not being at-one with it, not knowing it and owning it to be their true nature or Being, they do not develop its resources. Only the believer stands in his Christ-Being; he only is *in* Christ; in him Christ "dwells," or "abides," or "is at home." Of course it is not for us to say who is in Christ and who is not; it is for us to maintain that Christ is in all, the incorruptible Seed anointed with the promise. This is the witness which Christians ought now to be bearing with all their strength, and it is the recognition of this Fact which makes them disciples of the Lord Christ.

The universality of our Inheritance.

I was struck yesterday with the "seem" in Heb. iv. 1.* It is as much as to say that any coming short of the promise of rest in Christ Jesus can only be *in appearance*. The Promise is the inheritance of all; the enjoyment of it, *i.e.*, the entering *into* it, belongs to the belief in the universality of the in-

* "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it."

heritance (cf. Heb. v. 11-14).* I fancy the work of the Christian believer now is to apprehend and maintain with persistent earnestness the universality of Sonship generically, anointed with the Gift of the Holy Ghost for the education by Him of the Race into the fulness of its inheritance or destiny. Until the Christian Religion is founded on universal Being and the calling or bringing of certain members into Light or glory is maintained to be for the well-being of the whole, the *catholicity* of it is a fiction.

Conditional immortality

I think you will find that those who accept "conditional immortality" define or

* "Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For everyone that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

conceive of immortality as continuity of existence. Now this is certainly not the Scriptural conception. Immortality there certainly means freedom from mortality, that is, from all that separates us from full fellowship with God. Adam really died when he disobeyed, for he went out of that condition of relationship with God in which he had been, as is signified in his *hiding* from God. The prodigal son was really dead when he was separated from his father and his home; "this my son was dead" (νεκρός, "a corpse") "and is alive again," because restored home into fellowship with his father. Of course the Scriptural immortality *is* conditional; its condition is the coming to our Father Who is revealed in Christ Jesus, and the being reconciled to Him (2 Cor. v. 19, 20).* Annihilation, which some identify with con

* "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God

l immortality, has certainly no place in
·iptural interpretation of immortality.

Spirit.

› the question of the spirit's return to
ıile the soul undergoes purification in
and the possibility of some being
the Divine Spirit, without attempting
nto these ideas, it may be helpful to
ɔer that we are apt to be careless in our
the word "spirit." You will observe
ɔture that there are qualifying terms
with the word: *e.g.*, spirit "of His
spirit "of life in Christ Jesus," spirit
ɔd," spirit "which is in the Lord,"
of Truth," spirit "of man," "Holy"
etc., etc. Now the "spirit of man,"
sense of the spirit, which constitutes
nan, *i.e.*, a child of God, is a man's
ing; and is not the soul the individual
ıusness? Doubtless many men are
: the consciousness of the *Divine*
in fact, I suppose, all unbelievers are,
Divine Spirit the *Holy* Spirit is meant,

for the Holy Spirit is *received* (1 John iii. 24)* by those who seek or claim the Gift of their Heavenly Father, and according unto their faith it is received by them; it is the *right* of all, but all do not claim or possess their inheritance. "Behold I stand at the door and knock." When the door of our hearts is thrown open, and we believe that we are what He tells us we are, then do we enter into our inheritance of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost—*now* in part in this our mortality, *then* in fulness in our immortality.

The power of Hope.

Do you not think that the ordinary standpoint of so-called Christian teaching is undergoing a destruction, and that the devil's travesty is waning? Terrorism is no real factor in Christianity. Surely Christianity is the response which follows the recognition of Love and its beneficent Purpose of universal beatitude. In that atmosphere

* "And hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us."

eart beats freely and fully, for it is the which Love begets that saves. We to breathe the Hope before we attempt ıl with the distresses of life; then should e armed with the Sympathy that is ·ful, and not merely with the sympathy ; the recognition of a common woe.

Disorder without, yet Peace within.

This grief is all full of deepest teaching, and one feels how it must touch the Heart that knoweth the bitterness of the children's discipline. Is there not a wondrous sense of reality when one is dealing with ghastly manifestations of the disorder? Then He would have us trust in Him in our struggles with His foes, because they hide His triumph over the death. One rests upon the Eternal verities, and yet, at the same time, one struggles with the appearances that distress and vex in these mortal conditions. The *inner* consciousness of us all, however little we may realize the fact, is with Him, high above all disorder; the *outer*

consciousness meanwhile is oftentimes in a storm of distress. When the outer consciousness is gathered up into the Light of the inner, then will there be the perfect rest of "at-one-ness," then shall we "know that we know Him," as St. John puts it; the "at-two-ness" being at an end, we shall rule in Love with Him in the At-one-ment.

Our friend is as gold tried in the fire. I suppose that is the only way in which gold can be manifested, and adversity or evil is the effective trial. We trace in her an accentuation of character contributed by *fiery trial*, through which our disorder necessitates that all true things should pass for declaration and development. (1 Pet. iv. 12.)

Homesickness.

I suppose the surging unrest of this life comes from dissatisfaction with the world's fancied solaces, or the advancing sickness for Home. As one grows more Homesick, these prison-bars of corruption, weakness, and dishonour become more and more irksome, more and more oppressive, while the inward

vision grows brighter, and its corresponding aspirations stronger. That strange loneliness increases, which only the outward vision can fully dispel; foreshadowings of that joy unspeakable we now have when spirit meets in fellow-spirit a sympathetic vision.

This morning I was talking on Ephes. v. 8.* So much came home to me in dealing with the expression "ye were darkness;" not "ye were *in* darkness;" more than that, casting darkness around one, darkness itself inwardly and outwardly; "but now are ye light in the Lord," not only *in* the Light, but also Light-*givers*, transformed into the Light of Life, and so *Lights*. See 2 Cor. iv. 6,† and 2 Cor. iv. 10,‡ where both sides are indicated, being *in* the Light of Truth, and being Lights of Truth.

* "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light."

† "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

‡ "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body."

beautiful are these rays of hope from
:ome of Light! It is blessed to let them
ɔne's heart until they transfigure the
of the world's woe into a vision of that
:rable Beauty and universal Joy that will
forth from the groans of the travailing
ɔn.

Concentration.

I suppose concentr
must precede diffusion; at any rate I fe
so with myself. Concentration into I
the Centre, seems to pass into diffusion f
Him the Centre. He is the Door. I
I must look to Him, the Ideal Man, to
my true bearings with my fellows. Me
tion and conversation, used in the full se
of these words, then maintain one anotl
hence to me the pricelessness of the Scriptu
which focus our wandering weary eyes on
Centre from Whom Power, Love, and Wisc
flow into the heart and mind.

There are times when one lies as it v
helpless at the bottom of the tribulation-

of this world's disorder. The words of Scripture or of some living voice come with the word of quickening power: "Be of good cheer, *I have* overcome the world." It is a hideous nightmare through which we have to struggle into the full blaze of Unity, Truth, and Love. Our only abiding-place and refuge is in Him, and our wisdom is to abide in Him, the Saviour of the world, and to do what comes to hand in the solacing of human hearts out of the human pity He awakens in us, holding fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the Hope firm unto the end. To enter fully into this Divine Life we must have our souls ground to powder, it is thus that we enter into the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness.

Prayer is just Life, inspiration and respiration in the Kingdom of God, receiving and giving the circulation of Love. I am sure we are far too bustling, too much bent upon some outward manifestation of our zeal and belief; hence the eye is taken off the Centre, Prayer.

and to make a fair show in the flesh becomes the object of endeavour. There is something very grand, I feel, in the longings and yearnings of human hearts. Perhaps only in them do we really see the germs of the future blessedness. It would be far more truthful to measure each man by his yearnings than by his apparent accomplishments. What yearnings *He* felt when He was in the likeness of sinful flesh! and in those expressed in John xvii. we read our destiny.

The Good Shepherd.

On this, the "Good Shepherd" Sunday, one's thoughts circulate round the significant symbol. The thought before me at this moment is the completeness of His knowledge of the sheep, their ills, necessities, possibilities, all involving on the part of the Shepherd completeness of sacrifice, "perfect sympathy calling out the perfect remedy," as Westcott puts it. And one perceives the truth of this the more one's own sympathies are educated, and one's own life flows out. But oh! the woe of our present conditions, in which the eternal

ities are coming into view; through much
oulation we enter into the Kingdom of
eaven, where fullest sympathy and fullest
crifice abide in the fulness of power, love,
id wisdom. It must all be blessed indeed
i the appropriate conditions, when, even in
uch conditions as ours now are, the energy
f the Christ-Life bears us on in Hope and
ove. I cannot but think that we ought
rom time to time to retire somewhat from
he outward conflict with the disorder, in
rder to strengthen our hold of the Faith;
or a struggle with the darkness and misery
round, without quickened Hope, is a sorry
natter, too negative, even if persisted in, to
e of much avail. Perhaps one's dream of a
ttle Home of Transfiguration is never to be
alized outwardly in this world, but this quiet
abbath day, after a week's storm, speaks of
e restful work in the Eternal Kingdom,
id will readjust one's mind for the return
the week's work to-morrow. It is blessed
have one's appetite whetted for that time
hen the flock shall be One, even as the
hepherd is One! The correct reading in
hn x. 15 is such a radiant hope: "Even

as the Father knoweth me and I kno
Father." Then, in reply to the in
"How does the Lord *now* lay down H
for the sheep?" I can see it in His
members; our faith in Him as the S
God acknowledges that we owe it, t
down our lives for the brethren, though
with strong crying and tears. Yet it i
only reasonable service, and, our belief l
what it is, it is the only course possible
His living members. The higher and
our hope, the nobler will be our sac
for we shall be nearer to Him Who i
Sovereign and Universal Hope, and t
fore shall be more inspired with His S
for the Sacrifice. Westcott's Note on ver
comes with ever re-invigorating power: "
which *is* in the Eternal Counsel and Tru
things *becomes* in human history and this, s
by stage." We *are* more than conque
and we become conscious of the Fact thr
the destruction of the flesh and all its id

Reasonable Service.

Outward tribulation, inward Peace.

I fear you are in some anxiety. Perhaps when we meet we may talk about it, for really the one thing needful in the manifold distresses of this world is from time to time to commune with some friend so as to be re-established in the Faith, for only in that re-establishment can we resist the shocks of the outward storms. We need the assurance of Hope, viz., that God *is* very good, and *is* working all things into the fuller manifestation of His Love; in Hope we must patiently wait for the Vision. Wherefore we comfort one another with the words of Hope while the clouds hang heavily upon our sympathies and aspirations and susceptibilities.

Outwardly much tribulation, inwardly unspeakable peace, is the true condition of things for us now, but alas! how many are found battling with the tribulation with no Anchor of Hope, hither and thither tossed about almost in despair, for they have not been educated into Peace. Surely the only purpose of Christian teaching is to establish hearts in the Truth, that they may know their security in Him notwithstanding the numberless appearances of failure in all that goes on around them and in their own efforts. But we embark in enterprises of all kinds before we ourselves are standing on the Rock; so again and again it is the blind leading the blind. It would be better to spend more time in the rectifying of our own perceptions, and then in the fuller fellowship with the Truth we should see more clearly His mind, and thus witness better to our common relationship in Him. Truly Life is very sharp in its discipline, and we need much comfort from within to bear us along its rugged way, and to counterbalance increasing sense of outward weakness.

I understand Peace to be the result of

;nising God's Love and Work for the
, Joy to be the result of entering into
alling in Him to be benefactors to the
erse: Peace in receiving, Joy in giving.

The Sword of the Lord

Haggai ii. 4, 5* we have the ground of
gth and work in the assurance "My
t remaineth among you," "I am with
' Taking the thought that the builders
a sword in one hand and a trowel in the
:, we come to see what "work" means—
:ing evil by the power of His Spirit, which
: sword of the Lord; holding fast the Faith,
h is the spiritual sword: we shall be "re-
ıg the evil," and be using the trowel to
e stones in their place—rendering in the
:r of His Spirit helpful services to our
ws, the living Stones of the Temple. If
ıus edify one another in Love, the build-

Be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the
and work: for I am with you, saith the Lord of
, according to the word that I covenanted with
hen ye came out of Egypt, so my Spirit re-
th among you: fear ye not."

ing will rise for the Desire of all nations, Whose Presence will visibly fill all the living stones with Glory and Peace.

What message does the world need from its Prophets?

The world needs a message which (1) interprets its mixed sensation of wrongness and rightness, which rightness from time to time makes the wrongness evident and painful in varying degree; and (2) unfolds a view of God that shall include (i.) His fundamental Relation with man's Being, (ii.) His Purpose concerning mankind, (iii.) His Mode of achieving that Purpose; and which (3) for the grandeur of its Design and catholicity of its Embrace (i.) commends itself to the deeper and nobler instincts of mankind, (ii.) stimulates and sustains those instincts by its inherent Truth, and (iii.) regenerates effectually the whole range of thought and action.

This the Christ-Revelation claims to do. (1) It convinces mankind of the wrongness of that natural bent to make individualism the basis, and the outward world the horizon, of his ambition. It meets and witnesses to

the rightness of the deeper consciousness, which whispers concerning another Kingdom where self is not the centre and self-interest not the rule. (2) It unfolds a view of God, which arouses and sustains in living activity of wisdom, benevolence, and beneficence, the better nature of mankind, the Vision of the Righteous Father of mankind, Whose Purpose is that all men shall be saved and come to the knowledge of the Truth, and Whose Wisdom, Benevolence, and Power as the God and Saviour of the World are ever being exerted in behalf of the education of His offspring.* (3) The Hope which the Christian Revelation of God imparts to the human heart is that "better Hope" which can, by bringing us "nigh to the true God," do what the Law could not do, viz., save us from the death of selfishness and worldliness.† For it gradually uplifts the human heart into a region where selfishness, sectarianism, materialism, and worldliness are left behind, being slain by the

* Cf. John xvii. 25, 1 Tim. ii. 4, 1 Tim. iv. 10, Heb. xii. 9, 10, Luke xv. 4, 8, 24.

† Cf. Heb. vii. 19, Heb. viii. 6, 8, 10-12.

Power of an enthusiasm which belongs to the Eternal Kingdom of Universal and Omnipotent Love. This Revelation crowns with freedom (John viii. 32), and with joy unspeakable and full of glory (1 Peter i. 8), the best instincts of mankind.

The Sphere of the Idealist.

I dipped a little into Mazzini, and some remarks, this morning, in a letter upon an address of Ruskin's, suggest to me that Idealists must have a sorry time of it in this world; I use the word "Idealist" in the sense of one who sees the *true idea* of Human Society. But, dear Friend, is it not an error to suppose that *that* idea ever can be *realized* in this order of things, *i.e.* in this world? This life, it seems to me, is an outer court; in the Inner is the realizing of the Idea. Here, we are having our sympathies developed and trained for the exercise of authority and power in the "sweet reasonableness" of Love in that Inner court; and then, in the Inmost court, the Centre, all

authority and power will be put down, for all will be made perfect. God being All in all, there will be no greater or less, but infinite variety in perfect Unity.

It seems to me that these poet-prophet hearts, such as Mazzini, Lamennais, ex., etc., are enamoured of the ideal, and instead of their being tenderly recognised and listened to and cherished as seers into the land that is afar off, the Inner court, they are feared, etc., and are thus deprived of their appropriate sphere of utterance. Consequently, in the solitude of their vision they pine away or lose their way in political schemes, which can never realize their dreams. Are not such as they intended to inspire their age with deeper feelings and perceptions, and so to radiate out their light? They are too far-seeing for political life; their work is to uplift us all into higher realms of thought. It is of no use trying to anticipate the age in a political framework which the age cannot fill; that is beginning from without. Leavening the age, so that it demands more suitable embodiments of its enthusiasm, is apparently the work of all poets or seers,—to inspire but not to administer.

The world is cruel to its prophets, ays stoning them and then building ir sepulchres. If Lamennais had had ew more disciples, perhaps his great spirit ıld have lived in them and rejoiced in the flow of his life. If the clamour of the ıials of the ideal could be *out*clamoured the sympathetic utterances of believers in certain realization, in the age to come, of highest and widest hopes that have ever nd a place in the most Utopian imagina- ı, *then* the poet-prophets would not be ven into crushing solitude or ineffectual emes of political effort.

With regard to Friendships or human affection—I like the word "Friendship" best, because in viewing the matter from both the human and Divine sides we can use one and the same word. True human love is Divine, and the love wherewith God loves us is a human, because He loves us with that power in Him which corresponds with our order of Creation. But in God's love, as in ours, are two degrees. There is the Universal love (Charity) of us as His creatures, and secondly there is the special love (Friendship) of us as His friends, as those who understand Him and enter intelligently into His mind, those with whom He can

hold intelligent friendship. To this our Lord refers in John xvi. 27: "For the Father Himself loveth you (as friends), because ye have loved Me," etc., and He explains what He means by loving as friends (φιλεῖν) in John xiv. 23: "We will make *our abode* with him," *i.e.*, will be *at home*, as is possible, where there is reciprocity of love. Where there is reciprocity of love there is what we call Friendship. Lazarus was a friend of Jesus (John xi. 3), Who *loved* (ἀγαπᾷν) *all*, but had His friendships when on earth, and so He has now. Wherever there is reciprocity there is friendship; hence the latter is a heavenly thing, belonging to our higher as much as to our lower condition: really more so, for it finds a deeper reason and wider sphere for its existence there. While we are in this existence friendship may have a higher or a lower plane of action or reciprocity. If both the friends are standing on the lower plane, it will be an "animal" friendship, the reciprocity will move in the lower or "animal" plane. If one be on the higher and the other on the lower, the reciprocity will be incomplete, and there will be a

persistent sense of unrest accompanying it, more particularly felt by the one on the lower plane, to whom the cause of the sense of unrest will be less intelligible. The other will know the reason why the reciprocity is incomplete, and will seek to complete it by awakening the higher consciousness in his friend, knowing that in that awakening there will be no diminution of friendship, but an enlargement of reciprocity, in the completeness of which Rest will be found, for in the superior region of human consciousness it becomes a friendship in the Lord. The idea of Sacrifice is inherent in friendship, hence its truthfulness, its suffering, and its rest: its *truthfulness* witnessing to the co-membership of the Race, its *suffering* in that it is a truth struggling to express itself in adverse conditions, or in the want of a common ground of feeling and action; its *rest* is in full mutual understanding and reciprocity of service. I fancy friendships are portals into the apprehension of the solidarity of the Race, and of the true relations of God to each one of us; grand educations they seem to me. The higher the plane of friendships the less

:pendent are they on earthly conditions; ıe lower the plane (and we must remember hat the whereabouts of the plane depend on he standing of *both* the friends), the more dependent are friendships upon the outward conditions of existence here.

"In what sense can God be jealous of our friendships?" Only in so far as they are inadequate, in so far as they fall short on either side of that plane in which they can be perfect. If our friendships be in His Name, that is, if they be in the plane of our *true* Nature, then they will be complete. He will be in the midst, sealing them with the benediction of the whole glorified Body or Church; if friends are separated externally, He will take care that that separation deepens the friendship. It is true that the plane may be too superficial for the realization of the true blessedness of friendship, but God honours friendships in whatever plane they exist, and makes their errors to redound to an increase of life. They must be looked on as gifts of God, not flung to the devil; pearls that must not be cast to the swine: if we thus look upon friendships as embedded in the good Provi-

dence of God, then we shall neither be withered by the want of them nor intoxicated by the misuse of them, but, on the contrary, shall become stronger in the Lord and in the power of His might through their ministration. The devil or prince of this world hates *true* friendships; hence the tremendous perversions and hideous repudiations of them. They are jewels of the Kingdom of God, and must be "set" by us as in the Providence of God to be treasured in His Wisdom and Power. No friendship that is worthy of the name will be found to have been less than necessary for the perfection of the Friendship of the whole Body of mankind in and with the Lord.

I trust I have not wearied you with thoughts that are fairly clear and dear to my own heart. Friendship is a creature of God that is very good and never to be rejected, but to be received with thanksgiving, for it is sanctified to blessed ends through the word or power of God and proper employment or *use* of it. I am sure the word translated "prayer" in 1 Tim. iv. 5. (ἐντεύξεως) means "the due use" of the creature; it is the opposite to not using, or misusing it.

I rejoice greatly to hear that you are hysically so much better. When I am hysically exhausted I often find a strange parent access of strength in spiritual per-ption; but then calmness and meekness erewith we wait upon others is at a terrible count.

Interpretation of Parables.

I have been taking the Parable of the Sower, viewing the four conditions of soil as the stages through which the human heart passes. In the first it is *preoccupied with the external life*, mostly in youth; in the second it takes *a superficial interest in spiritual things*; in the third there is a *deeper interest*, but it is hampered and choked by the anxiety and deceitfulness of the necessities and cares of the external life; while in the fourth and last stage, the heart is honest and good, that is, its interest in spiritual things is *thoroughly deep and single-minded*: the condition in which full fruitage is secured. How plainly one can see the

Husbandman's hand, through all the correcting circumstances of life, in softening the surface, deepening the soil, and clearing the ground: making in His own time all hearts "honest and good," and then, as the Sower, ever sowing on the ground prepared and unprepared, the Seed of the Word of Life. Each condition I seem to see indicated in my own life. Oh! the Longsuffering of the Husbandman, the Prodigality of the Sower, and the Comfort of the Seed sown, are they not a blessed Trinity?

I am greatly interested in a principle of interpretation of our Lord's Parables in the Synoptical Gospels, which arose in a conversation upon the fundamental principles of the Christ-Revelation. I think it helps us out of a certain perplexity which arises in our study of some of the Parables. As our perceptions and sympathies become more awake to the real significance of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, and we are consciously more in fellowship with His Spirit, we find ourselves disposed to compassionate the reproved ones rather than to rejoice with the approved, and in such compassion we feel sure in our own

consciousness of being nearer the mind of Christ as represented in the Gospel history. For example, we compassionate the excluded imprudent virgins, or the condemned slothful servant, or the repudiated kidlings (Matt. xxv.), in the aspiration of rendering them some service, as our Lord Himself was ever drawn to do when on earth. So we feel more with Him in that compassion than if we stepped inside with the good to light and feasting and merriment. Yet, on the other hand, this sympathy seems in conflict with the purpose of the Parable; hence the perplexity and confusion. Now, are we justified in thinking of the persons brought before us in the Parables as human individuals rather than personified tempers of mind? And, in so doing, are we not really disregarding our Lord's warning as to the reason of the use of such Parables? "Therefore speak I to them in parables, because they seeing, see not, and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand" (Matt. xiii. 13). Such Parables can only be spiritually discerned; without the "Key" of the Kingdom of God they are in their true significance closed to the understanding. Looking at them from a

iritual point of view, and interpreting them as presentations or *personifications of certain irits*, or tempers of mind and conduct, we ıd no such perplexity or confusion between e Christ-awakened sympathies in our hearts d the clear drift of the purpose of the Parle. We recognise the justice and mercy the exclusion of the neglectful, slothful, d self-seeking spirit from the Kingdom of ghteousness, wherein all are inspired by ıve, the self-sacrificing Spirit that is altoher wise, diligent, and sympathetic. ch a principle of Interpretation gives a orous teaching to the Parable of the wer—the necessary clearing away of the rit of indifference, shallowness, and worldess, until in an honest and good heart the ed of the Kingdom of God rewards the ›digal Sower and the patient Husbandman the richness of the Harvest in the fourth l last stage of the cultivation of the human ırt. Also in the Parable of the Seed and tares, thus viewed, one exults in the ›mised destruction of the tares, those profits growths of the flesh, wherein the evil nciple worketh, and the final disentanglent and garnering of the Heavenly Harvest.

Modern Miracles.

With regard to miraculous (so-called) answers to prayer, in the shape of healing, etc., do you not think that, to a man like L. R., or to any spiritually-minded person, they present themselves rather as expressions of intimate fellowship with the mind of God than as evidence to convince the gainsayers or inquirers? I do not see that such miracles can do any more in this respect than scientific discoveries have done, viz., assure us of a beneficent mind behind physical nature. It seems to me that the speciality of such miracles as our friend relates is their expression of the intimate relation between the mind of man and the Mind of God, perhaps I may

say the coincidence of mind or will, so that the prayer of the man is realized in the order of phenomena, there being perfect One-ness in the order of Providence and the mind of the petitioner. I am inclined to think that the spiritual aspect of things can never be so put into words, that an objector can be intellectually convinced of the truth of a spiritual perception, for spiritual perceptions are matters of interpretation appealing to the sympathetic instinct, not to scientific proof. Consequently I should rather sympathize with a scientific man shrinking from so-called miracles (I mean such as those narrated by L. R.); they cut right across his lines of pursuit, and tumble all his perceptions into confusion. They belong to the path of the spiritualist rather than to that of the scientist, and the latter had better leave them alone until he is prepared to enter that plane of inquiry or perception in which they have an orderly setting, where they will be recognised as belonging to the methods and order of another series of laws. I am glad to think that the scientist does well to perfect *his* order of pursuit, tracing cause and effect

Modern Miracles and Science.

in an *open* line of observation; feeling sure as I do that if he be true to himself he will attain the Truth ultimately in *his walk* as another will attain it in the flight of *his* [illegible].

The Spiritual Body.

You speak of having met someone who thinks that the unique part of Christ's Revelation is the Redemption of the Body, and that we ought to look for its Redemption to be carried out in this order of existence. I should like to put it a little differently. The unique part of the Christian Revelation is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit Who *forms* the Spiritual body, so that when the believer dies, or, more truly, awakes, he awakes after the likeness of the Lord, to co-operate with Him freely in redemptive Love.

A great deal of matter in illustration of the formation of the Spiritual body, *i.e.*, of

the completion or perfection of the organs of consciousness in relation to the ideal or Spiritual world, has come before me since I wrote, both Scriptural and analogical. I quite understand the quickening of our mortal bodies (Rom. viii. 11)* to refer to this, the getting rid of that death or mortality which limits and imprisons us in this order of existence, by developing and perfecting the power of the incorruptible Seed of Life which brings us into living contact and consciousness with the Life of the Universe. *Then* the grub body is no longer wanted; like the husk to the seed, it has done its work in the early stage of growth, and now is put off as the butterfly puts off the chrysalis-shell, and the materials of that body go to the churchyard to return into that which may through various modifications become part of another human earthly body.

True, indeed, Church-systems also are grub-bodies, useful as long as their earthly

* "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you."

and transitory character is recognised, pernicious and murderous of Spiritual Life, when they are worshipped as ideal and permanent institutions. Woe, woe to such Churches, is being declared by the Holy Spirit, Who is revealing to the minds of men the shortcomings of such Churches in their perceptions and actions. The development of spiritual perception will burst them, and their outer garments will be cast off as grave-clothes, worn out and no longer needed. Surely at the present time deeper perceptions and aspirations *are* bursting the swaddling-bands of rudimentary Christian life.

The word "body" seems to me to indicate a particular range of consciousness. The physical body denotes the faculties which form a physical consciousness, and by a spiritual body I think we mean the faculties which constitute the inward or spiritual consciousness. I fancy our bodies will be more transparent in the next condition of things, so that the inspiring principle will be able to manifest itself, and the whole organization will be more in harmony with the mind of the Spirit. We shall see more clearly how

we can be happy in one another; and shall be able with increasing freedom to execute our designs.

[illegible] I believe that those whose hearts have been touched in a world-reaching sympathy and [illegible] eagerness to exercise their inheritance of liberal beneficence in behalf of the suffering, woe-begotten brothers and sisters in their tribulation, will enter at once, when they put this world, into the fulness of larger ministration. Their stored-up expressions of human woe will then rush forth in the exercise of the powers of the redeemed body, healing and blessing the *spirits* of the wearied sufferers.

The Scriptures and the Word.

The Scriptures of the Old Testament are able to make us "wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. iii. 15). Scripture by itself cannot make us "wise unto salvation," but only Scripture *interpreted by the Spirit which we have in Christ Jesus.* There is much in the Ancient Scriptures which the Spirit we have in Christ Jesus condemns as a thing past and gone for us, as, *e.g.*, the conduct of Elijah in Luke ix. 55, and again in Heb. viii. 13, "In that He saith, 'A New covenant,' He hath made the first old. But that which is becoming old and waxeth aged is nigh unto vanishing away." So too the argument in

2 Peter i. 20 is that all Prophecy comes from God and has a *universal* significance; God is the Fount of prophecy, and His message is for all, for Prophecy is not a private matter intended for the few, but a light to shine *on* all hearts, and until the shining of the Day Star *in* our own hearts we do well to take heed unto the prophecy of Scripture, as a lamp shining in a dark place.

"Thy word is a light unto my feet." What word? Not the Canonical Books of the Old Testament; the time of the utterance forbids that. Possibly the written Law is referred to; but I think Conscience, the word of God in the heart, is chiefly meant: "the word which is nigh thee in thy mouth and in thy heart" (Rom. x. 8), leading us on to the "Word of Christ" (Col. iii. 16),* Whose Gift of the Holy Spirit of Wisdom and Power forms that same "Word of Christ" in us. It is the Holy Spirit Who is to convince, uphold, and guide us. He may use Scripture in so doing,

* "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

or not. We must not put Holy Scripture between us and the Holy Spirit; to do so would be to place an Angel of Light in the place of the Light Himself; this is idolizing the works of God; Holy Scripture is a work of God, it is *one* of God's words to mankind; but true religion adores the Author of all words, and recognising every creature to be a word of God, it accepts no other ultimate authority than the Quickening Spirit Himself (*vide* Phil. iii. 3). Holy Scripture is the record of God's teaching of men, and of men's conduct in relation to that teaching; useful to us, blessedly useful, as a revelation of God's mind at various times, to various peoples, in the various ways of precept, warning, encouragement, instruction. It shows us how man has needed perpetual guidance and upholding in the way of Life, without which he must fail, and it encourages us ever to look for guidance and upholding to the Author of Wisdom and Power Who alone is the Lord and Teacher of every human heart.

The battle of the Lord has to be fought upon the battle-field of a misapprehension

of Holy Scripture as well as upon that of a misapprehension of the Church. Our hearts are the fleshy tables upon which the mind of our God is being written now just as much as in the old times which were before, and now more clearly than then. The good fight of the Faith is the maintaining that the glorified Lord is the Elder Brother of the whole race, and, as the true Melchizedek, is distributing *immediately* to every member of that race the fruits of His Own toil, passion, and victory, viz., the Spirit of His Glory, by Whom they that believe in this Faith *once for all delivered to the Saints* are brought as Sons of God into Glory (Heb. ii. 10-15). A. says, "How should we presume to teach unless sent of God?" Ah yes, but that does not mean "with the Bible in our heads and hands;" surely it means sent by the Spirit of God testifying the truth in our hearts. A. is an evangelist, and he finds appeals to the testimony as revealed in Scripture his bulwark; yet only does he administer with *power* that testimony in Holy Scripture which has been testified in his own heart by the Holy Ghost; therefore the Word he *preaches* is the Word

f God in his own heart. There is much in ıe Bible which has not yet been written on ıe fleshy table of his heart, and which he ould never preach, though he finds it in his ible, for it belongs to a time that is past, hen the hearts of believers were far less able) receive the things of God than they are ow. I should like to add a word of appreiation and love in the Spirit of the dear vangelist. His words refresh one by their enuine welcome and utterance of Truth as : comes home to him. Only let us hold fast the lamp" in its place and the Day Star in ts place, not substituting the lamp for the)ay Star, or letting go the lamp before the)ay Star has risen in our hearts,—after that :surrection we shall rejoice ever again and gain in the *written* testimony for instruction nd comfort.

The Attributes of God.

It seems to me that the common practice of setting one "attribute" or quality characteristic of God against another is faulty. I mean in such a form as this: considering His mercy as qualifying His justice, or, as is sometimes stated, yielding to His justice, as though the two sprang from different sources and checked one another. Or again, in associating justice with punishment and mercy with pardon; the result of such arrangement being a hopeless confusion and endless misapprehension of God. Surely we do well to accept the statement in Psalm xxv. 10: "*All* the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth;" and such they are found

to be by those who keep His covenant and testimonies. The justice or righteousness of the Lord is as much evidenced as His mercy *in the pardoning of iniquity*,* just as His mercy equally with His justice is evidenced in His *by no means clearing the guilty;* for nothing could be worse for the guilty than to be cleared of punishment, which is the means whereby he recognises the guilt and seeks the re-creation of his nature. God in His mercy has given to us His Holy Spirit to create us anew to good works, and thereby is just to us, and is revealed as the Righteous Father of all Mercies. God in His justice requires of His children perfect righteousness, which belongs to perfect Sonship; He is All-merciful, being content with nothing less than perfection for us. When we look at things from our experience of human action, we must make these accommodations, balancing our feelings of justice with our feelings of mercy, because of the state of our hearts, and the imperfection of conventional

* "Thou, Lord, art merciful, for Thou renderest to every man according to his works."—Ps. lxii. 12.

morality, necessarily imperfect, owing to our imperfect knowledge and imperfect powers of action. And so it comes about, that mercy and justice are looked upon as two separate lines, between which we have to strike a middle course, neither, on the one hand, being inexorably just, according to our standard of justice, nor, on the other hand, being over-leniently merciful, according to our standard of palliating circumstances. This balancing is necessary because of the imperfect knowledge of the facts on which our judgments are based, and of our imperfect vision as to what on the whole is best. With God it is quite otherwise. With Him the lines of mercy and justice are coincident; He is always just and always merciful, in one word, always Love. Directly we break up Love into fancied component elements, we come into confusion. Our God *is* Love, and He is nothing else than Love. We may, in our inchoate knowledge of Love, sometimes speak of mercy and wrath and justice as if they were not all aspects of Love, dealing with the various concretions of weakness and sorrow, or of sin and evil, etc. We know

that He Who is Love is merciful to the weak and those who are out of the way, is wrathful against all imperfection (slavery) and evil, is just to *Himself*, to what we *are*, and to *what* He has designed us to become; so that His design *must*, because He is just and true, be ultimately realized to the full. *Endless* torment, or *everlasting* loss, is based upon two errors of the human mind guided by appearances. The Christian Revelation has given us Righteous Judgment (John vii. 24),* has cut at the root of the teaching of the carnal mind upon the subject of the ultimate condition of God's creatures. And this it has done by annihilating the two errors upon which it is based, in the revelation (1) of our God as the *All-loving* Father, and (2) of the *solidarity* of mankind. As long as there is *one* member of the race imperfect, the Shepherd-Parent is pursuing it in Love, until it be safely rested on His Shoulder; and all the rest of mankind are crying out for the wanting member, without which their own life does not

* "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment."

fully and freely vibrate. I am sure these are the two fundamental features of the Christian Revelation, of which all its utterances are the manifold expression: (1) The Parental Love of the Father: (2) The Solidarity of Mankind, to be conformed to the Image of His Son.

Just a few words in reply to your welcome comments on my last. Of course in saying "God *is* Love, and He is nothing else than Love," I ought to have said, "*Our* God is Love, and He is nothing else than Love." I mean *God as revealed in Christ. He* is our God: Love alone exhaustively represents His revealed character; anything inconsistent with Love He is not; anything else than Love He is not (according to the terms of our revelation)—therefore everything is interpreted under the light of "God is Love." If I say "God is all things," I mean that God is the Being or Substance of all things. Love is not *a* characteristic of God, but the essential character of Him in Whom "we live and move and have our Being"; and in dealing with such expressions as "justice" and "mercy," in relation to God, I should protect myself from the ordinary defect

associated with those terms by appending to them "of Love," and thus contemplate them as the justice or the righteousness of Love, the mercy of Love.

Other religions have talked of God as a Father as well as a King, but have they sounded the depths of Parental Sacrifice in behalf of the offspring, as the Christian Religion has done? Have any really presented us with an idea of Parental Love in any way comparable with that of the Christian, either in effectiveness of power or in width of embrace?

In reply to your concluding inquiry as to the methods by which we arrive at knowledge of God, I would remark that there seem to be two chief avenues of knowledge—the *outward*, such as observation, hearing, etc., and the *inward*, intuition. I understand that through these two avenues there are constantly streaming in materials of Divine Knowledge, which the conscience, or spiritual mind, assimilates, and, in so doing, advances more and more in the knowledge and apprehension of God.

The Glory of God.

How dry, dear Friend, is that Essay you send me! Neither the writer, nor he whose writings he criticises, seem to have drunk of the Living Fountain. This kind of writing about an Impersonal Deity who is *apart from us* is deadly, more anti-Christian in effect than any amount of so-called infidelity: though professedly Christian, it certainly seems to come from one who has never entered into the Christian Revelation. Surely, surely, the Lord Jesus would have us to know that the *Glory* of God is *the beatitude* of His creatures, and that beatitude is fellowship with Him in knowledge and operation. If I do all things to the

Glory of God, surely God will be the Spring and End of my life; I shall drink of Him, and, in the refreshment of the Love I drink, be loving in all ways to Him in His creatures. I am sure there is more atheism in that essay than in much that is published under that title. "To be Self-centred is in the creature the vice of selfishness; it is a necessary attribute in the Creator." Why, surely there is a slip in the sense in which "Self-centred" is used in the two sentences. Self-centredness is only wrong for us when we make the false self which is apart from our fellow-creatures, the Alpha and Omega of our thoughts, etc. So, if God made Himself the Alpha and Omega of His thought, etc., as *apart from the creatures* He has made, *He* would be as bad as the creature who did so. It is *impossible* for God to be Self-centred in the sense in which it is used of the creature in the above sentence, but in that sense in which it is possible and appropriate for the Creator to be Self-centred it is true and virtuous for the creature. For the true Self is the Divine in each one of us, and if we be centred there, we shall necessarily radiate out in Love to

all creation, even as God, Who is centred in the Universal Life, does. If I am centred in the false self, I am dead, for it is dead; God has no dead self, He can only be centred in Life, which is Love. Hence we understand the injunction in the old Law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;" that Law was holy and good, and therefore there is a holy and good sense in which we ought to love ourselves. When we have found the true Self, the Christ, Who is our Life, in loving that Self we shall love *all*, for we shall find the same Self in them. However, I should dispute the theological accuracy of using such a term as "Self-centredness" of God; it is too liable to be misunderstood.

I was thinking yesterday how Isaiah lx. 21* supplies one with some conception of God's estimate of His Glory. I agree with you in thinking that "As I have loved you"†

* "Thy people shall also be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified."

† John xiii. 34: "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."

ws up "as thyself,"* but then in wing up we do not mean that anything e original statement is lost, but only ded or deepened. It is because the elf is Divine, that therefore we can by w of Being love one another as He, in ı the Divine Humanity is expressed, us. I am feeling very much more he truth of the fact, that our coming Life is coming into the universal iousness. So far as we are really alive e more consciously in others than in ves. The Centre or Spring is in one's he Circumference or Consciousness is e's fellow-creatures. That does not s exactly express my meaning. I that one's *consciousness* of Being to be made up of the being of one's creatures; they seem to be to one the ousness of one's own Being or Life. ıore I *love*, the more I consciously live; ore I live in others, the more I come Consciousness, *i.e.*, The Fellowship of

ıtt. xix. 19: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour elf."

Life. Hence, when I altogether live in others, I shall truly and fully be alive. God will dwell in me and I in God. The being driven and dragged out of the limited *dead me* into the limitless "I am that I am," the true Centre of consciousness, constitutes the present travail-pangs, the multiplied sorrow mentioned to Eve; but the Spirit of Love, Who spoke, will accomplish it by the Breath of His Mouth, "the Word that is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit." The old self-soul must be divided from the Spirit, that the quickened Spirit may form for us a new universal Soul whereby we shall be in living fellowship with the Universe.

The more we depreciate the creature, the more we insult the Creator; the common way of looking at the creature, as a thing apart from the Creator, is the most injurious form of Atheism. Oh, do you not feel, "Let me be with the poor outcasts rather than with a God, whose glory can be indifferent to, or otherwise than bound up with, the beatitude of His creatures"? I

do not know *that* god at all, except in the dark parts of my heart; but the True God is Eternal life for all, and to know Him is our joy as it is His glory. I desire to worship the God Who, if His enemy hungers, gives him meat, if he thirsts, gives him drink, filling his mind with Love that consumes the chaff of enmity. The Epistle of the week brings this home to one: "Recompense to no man evil for evil, but if thine enemy hunger, feed him": just what *He* ever does, Calvary telling us that He does not reckon our offences, but gives the Living Bread of His Flesh and Living Water of His Spirit to hungry and thirsty hearts, to reconcile them to Himself in the full confidence of His abiding compassion towards the sinner.

In F. C.'s last letter these words occur as expressive of Catholic Theology: "God creates, preserves, governs, assists, punishes, destroys humanity, for His own sake, not for ours. Not that He gains the least advantage from Creation, from the beauty of things created, from the willing service and homage of His rational creatures; but it is His Divine Will to manifest outside of Himself this reflec-

tion of His own infinite beauty and goodness." What a relief it is to turn from such a ghastly interance to the Christ-Revelation! "God so loved the world": "This my *son* was dead and is alive again": "Let *us* be merry." Surely the only conception of Divine Glory in that Revelation is the beauty, welfare, and love of His creatures. The Glory of the Faithful Creator is the beatitude of His Creation, and the declaration of the Righteous Father's Name is that He will never rest until each one of His offspring finds his rest upon His Bosom.

Further, God's work of destruction is not "in destroying humanity," but in destroying all that separates humanity from fullest fellowship in and with Himself. Can we help believing that a God who is Love exults in the exultation of His creatures? The expression in Prov. xvi. 4, "The Lord hath made all things for Himself," surely means that of the very necessity of Love, Creation *must* take place, and that the Creating Love can be satisfied with nothing short of fullest fellowship with all orders of Creation, so that all things are "of Him," and "on account of"

Him, and "with a view to" Him, as their final resting-place. Is not F. M. O. really right in saying that "God is not intrinsically perfect without us," though it may be a deeper thought than Scholasticism has reached? Yet is it not involved in the fact that in the Visible we come to see that which is in the Invisible? His extrinsic Glory or Perfection is the perfection of the creatures; the intrinsic glory or perfection is the perfection of the Word, Who is the Substance of the creatures. Whatever is seen in the Visible must have its *root* in the Invisible; hence we have our place in the *intrinsic* glory. Are there not yet treasures of thought to be found in the Christ-Revelation, the production of which will not exasperate the Agnostic and Positivist, as F. C. thinks, but rather bring them to glorify their Father which is in heaven, and for the *production* of which we may have to reckon ourselves debtors to Agnostic and Positivist?

The Nam of the Lor

I quite agree with what you say in your last letter, that we seem to have to learn the

various names of God before we can grasp *the* Name. *The* Name grasps us, while the others are various outer courts through which we come into the Sanctuary or Name of God; in that Name we find pasture wherever our outer life may take us. When we know Him as *Lord*, then we know Him as the One Who endows us with universal intelligence, love, and power, Who unifies us with the Body whereby we partake of the general life of thought, feeling, and power. We can only attain our personality of Life in the Personality of the Body. In attaining this, self-consciousness passes away, we enter into the universal consciousness, *i.e.*, an intelligent sympathy with the whole Body. This is the true Self-consciousness of a fully quickened member of the Body. It is disease which is the cause of all self-thought or sense of isolation; the healthy member lives in fellowship with the Head and fellow-members, and in the fellowship of the *whole* Body it alone finds the full joy of Being. Do you not think that when the Lord says the man and the woman "*become* one flesh" (Matt. xix. 5), He means that the man and his wife

ɔme a *unit*, but "he that is joined to the
d is one spirit" (2 Cor. vi. 17), is quick-
d into *the Unity*, attains Personality?
: first is a union of that which is divided,
male and the female, the second a union
hat which is undivided, wherein there is
her male nor female; when we are joined
he Lord of our undivided Being, then
consciousness is being actualized in the
nbers of the Body. When *all* are fully
ed to the Lord, then the Body of
nanity will be completely alive, the
sonality of each member perfect in *the*
sonality of the Head—the realization of
"very good" in Gen. i. 31.

The Lordship of Christ.

I quite appreciate your difficulty in accepting the term "the Lordship of Christ," and I would not for a moment assert that "to know God as Spirit" may not be a more advanced perception or apprehension. But the Personality of the term Lord helps me; the Lord Jesus is my Personal God, and for the awakening, sustaining, and developing of my affections I seem to need that "individualized" presentation of Deity. "Spirit" is too abstract at present for me. I find in the apprehension of God, which "the Lord" represents to me, the Comforter or Helper. I quite agree with you that "Lord" seems an individualized word, and gives the thought of limitations,

while "Spirit" is free and diffused: but do we not, through the knowledge of the individualized "Lord" get really to the knowledge of "Spirit" universal and diffused? Can it really be called knowledge, I mean in the full sense of the word, if it be less than an intelligent and sympathetic fellowship with the Universal Spirit? Is it not an indefinite apprehension of something which is far off, rather than an intimate fellowship with Some One ever nigh? "The Lord" to me means the Universal, tender, sympathizing, all-perfecting Friend. The one word which expresses what I understand it to mean is *Husband*, in its ideal sense of Guide, Sympathizer, and Supporter: on Whom, every human heart, in its weakness, narrowness, and ignorance may lean, in sure and certain confidence of being made entirely One with the Wisdom, Love, and Power of the Most High, in whom "we live and move and have our Being." "The Lord" is an apprehension of the Spirit, which meets the present necessities, and I fancy that, when our education is complete in this order of things, we shall enter into some further ap-

prehension of God as All in all, when "Lordship of Christ," as we understand i present, has completed its work. I do think that this apprehension conflicts with less limited one, but rather leads to the vi and complete apprehension of it. I aware that the popular use of the term, " Lord," and others which you quote, indic something very different from my mean Not until we have had sectarianism burnt out of us shall we, I think, be able deal with such questions from the platform the Christ-Revelation, the keynote to wh is Catholicity, in the sense of unveiling Being of the Race, its Destiny, and the whereby its destiny is attained.

Yes—it is the unpronounceable Na learnt in the secret place, it is the N given to Jesus, Which every tongue is confess, and Which every heart must c to know (Phil. ii. 10, 11).

e that is ned to the rd is One irit.

In the realization of the *immediate* Prese of the Word of Life there must be the fee of unspeakable awe, in the sense of being

with Him, and in the thought that He is operative in one, for the benediction of others. *Then*, as I understand it, we are beginning to realize our true Personality in the wondrous Christ-consciousness. It transcends words, but it opens Heaven; it is the "opening of the Heavens," and the outflow or inflow is all Power and Joy of One-ness with the Author of our Being, qualifying us to be comforters to our fellow-creatures. "It shall be *in him a well* of living water springing up into Eternal Life:" the consciousness of One-ness with the Source of all life; and "*out of him shall flow* rivers of living water;" this is the transporting delight of being God-like, life-giving, to others. His Purpose surpasses all we could have anticipated—weak, ignorant nothingness passes away to give place to That Which is operative for highest Comfort to all! It brings with it the awe of the Seraphim, who cover their faces with their wings in the rapture of intimate knowledge of Him expressed in the unwearied ministries of Love.

THE END.

Elliot Stock, Paternoster Row, London.

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